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OFFICIAL REPORT
(HANSARD)

Tuesday, June 19, 2018

Speaker: The Honourable Geoff Regan

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HOUSE OF COMMONS

Tuesday, June 19, 2018

The House met at 10 a.m.

Prayer

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

● (1005)

[*English*]

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO PETITIONS

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36(8), I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the government's response to nine petitions.

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CERTIFICATES OF NOMINATION

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister of Small Business and Tourism, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 111.1, I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the Certificate of Nomination, with the biographical notes, for the proposed appointment of Yves Giroux as the Parliamentary Budget Officer. I request that the Certificate of Nomination and biographical notes be referred to the Standing Committee on Finance.

* * *

INTERPARLIAMENTARY DELEGATIONS

Mr. Robert Oliphant (Don Valley West, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 34(1) I have the honour to present to the House, in both official languages, the report of the Canada-Africa Parliamentary Association respecting its participation at the bilateral mission to the Republic of Kenya, Nairobi, and other cities in the Republic of Kenya, from March 11 to 17.

It also gives me the opportunity to thank the analysts on the committee, André Léonard and Brian Hermon, as well as our clerk, Grant McLaughlin, for their fine work throughout this year.

COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

HEALTH

Mr. Bill Casey (Cumberland—Colchester, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure and honour to present, in both official languages, the 18th report of the Standing Committee on Health, entitled "Report on Highly Sweetened Pre-Mixed Alcoholic Beverages".

Pursuant to Standing Order 109 the committee requests that the government table a comprehensive response to this report.

I want to compliment the clerk, the analysts, and the authors of this report, who have captured the essence of our study so well, as they always do. I also want to thank the members of the committee and witnesses who helped us come to a conclusion on this urgent issue.

INDIGENOUS AND NORTHERN AFFAIRS

Hon. MaryAnn Mihychuk (Kildonan—St. Paul, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the 15th report of the Standing Committee on Indigenous and Northern Affairs, entitled "From the Ashes: Reimagining Fire Safety and Emergency Management in Indigenous Communities".

Pursuant to Standing Order 109 the committee requests that the government table a comprehensive response to this report.

I want to note that it was a unanimous report. We heard from many people across the nation about evacuation services. A lot of this was triggered by the fact that hon. members from the opposition had the opportunity to see two sites, one in British Columbia and one in Manitoba, to highlight the differences and the challenges.

I sincerely thank those who participated and presented to the committee to help make a fulsome report.

[*Translation*]

PROCEDURE AND HOUSE AFFAIRS

Hon. Larry Bagnell (Yukon, Lib.):

[*Member spoke in aboriginal language*]

Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the 66th report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs entitled "The Use of Indigenous Languages in Proceedings of the House of Commons and Committees".

[*Member spoke in aboriginal language*]

[*English*]

This is a historic report. The clerks and members of Parliament realize the magnitude of the report to bring indigenous languages into the House of Commons. It started when the member for Winnipeg Centre spoke in an indigenous language and brought this issue up. The Speaker referred it to the procedure and House affairs committee, which was very proud, as all members of the House of Commons and this Parliament will be, of this important step toward reconciliation and this change to the House of Commons with respect to our relations with aboriginal people. There was also great input from the member for Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik—Eeyou.

I congratulate all the committee members, the members of Parliament, and all the clerks and researchers involved in this very historic report.

ACCESS TO INFORMATION, PRIVACY AND ETHICS

Mr. Bob Zimmer (Prince George—Peace River—Northern Rockies, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the 16th report of the Standing Committee on Access to Information, Privacy and Ethics, entitled "Addressing Digital Privacy Vulnerabilities and Potential Threats to Canada's Democratic Electoral Process".

I would like to thank all members of the committee and all witnesses who appeared before us.

STATUS OF WOMEN

Mrs. Karen Vecchio (Elgin—Middlesex—London, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the 13th report of the Standing Committee on Status of Women, entitled "A Call to Action: Reconciliation with Indigenous Women in the Federal Justice and Correctional Systems".

Pursuant to Standing Order 109 the committee requests that the government table a comprehensive response to this report.

I would like to thank the clerk as well as all of our analysts who have worked on this. It is a great report, and I am proud to table a second report in less than two weeks.

Ms. Rachael Harder (Lethbridge, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour of tabling the Conservative Party's supplementary report with regard to the study on indigenous women in the justice system completed by the Standing Committee on the Status of Women.

As Conservatives, we will always stand up for victims of crime. Because the majority of indigenous women in the correctional system were first victimized before they became perpetrators, it is incumbent upon Canada's justice system to focus, first and foremost, on standing up for victims to ensure they receive the assistance they need to recover from the sins committed against them.

In our supplementary report, we urge the government to make indigenous women, rather than the bloated bureaucracy, the focus of its financial investments.

[*Translation*]

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES ACT

Mr. François Choquette (Drummond, NDP) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-411, An Act to amend the Official Languages Act (understanding of official languages).

He said: Mr. Speaker, I rise in the House today to continue the long fight for access to justice in both official languages, a fight that was started by our former colleague, Yvon Godin.

After introducing Bill C-203 on the bilingualism of Supreme Court of Canada judges, which was sadly voted down by the Liberals, I am now introducing a bill to amend the Official Languages Act in relation to the understanding of official languages. To summarize, this bill would require the government to commit to ensuring that judges who sit on the Supreme Court understand both official languages.

In its report entitled "Ensuring Justice is Done in Both Official Languages", the Standing Committee on Official Languages made a series of recommendations, the first being that the government table a bill during the 42nd Parliament guaranteeing that bilingual judges are appointed to the Supreme Court of Canada.

It is obvious that the government lacks both the will and the resolve to listen to the experts' testimony and to the committee members.

Everyone knows that a policy is not an effective way to ensure access to justice in both official languages. A policy is not a law. That is why I am introducing a bill that, admittedly, is not a panacea. However, it is a good step forward, and it will help improve the situation.

(Motion deemed adopted, bill read the first time and printed)

* * *

● (1010)

CANADA SHIPPING ACT, 2001

Mr. Robert Aubin (Trois-Rivières, NDP) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-412, An Act to amend the Canada Shipping Act, 2001 (Compensation for Damage Due to Navigation and Shipping Activities Fund).

He said: Mr. Speaker, this morning I have the honour to introduce, seconded by my colleague from Berthier—Maskinongé, a bill that offers a meaningful response to victims of the incidents in Yamachiche.

Even though a report submitted to Transport Canada stated that damages suffered by residents were not attributable to an act of God, those residents never received financial compensation. As faithful representatives of the people, and in keeping with the practice established by Jack Layton, we have honoured our duty to oppose the government by questioning it about this issue.

With the introduction of this bill this morning, we are proposing a solution. This very simple bill would create a fund to support victims of maritime incidents. Money in the fund would come from penalties incurred by vessels that break Transport Canada rules. Victims would receive compensation without burdening the public purse.

In the spirit of collaboration, we invite the Minister of Transport to consider this bill and champion it without delay.

(Motion deemed adopted, bill read the first time and printed)

* * *

[*English*]

PARLIAMENTARY LIBRARIAN

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister of Small Business and Tourism, Lib.) moved:

That, pursuant to Standing Order 111.1(2), the House approve the appointment of Heather P. Lank as Parliamentary Librarian for a term of five years.

The Speaker: The question is on the motion. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

An hon. member: On division.

(Motion agreed to)

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PETITIONS

CANADA SUMMER JOBS PROGRAM

Mr. Earl Dreeshen (Red Deer—Mountain View, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present a petition regarding the Canada summer jobs program. It is signed by constituents from my riding and surrounding areas.

The petitioners believe that the current Liberal government's proposed attestation, requiring Canada summer jobs program applicants to hold the same view as the government, would contravene the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

Mr. Bob Zimmer (Prince George—Peace River—Northern Rockies, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to present a petition today signed by petitioners from my constituency.

The petitioners call on the Prime Minister to defend the freedoms of conscience, thought, and belief and withdraw the attestation requirement for applicants to the Canada summer jobs program.

CYCLING

Mr. Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am honoured to rise again and table a petition in support of Bill C-312, an act to establish a national cycling strategy. My constituents have asked that I table this petition today. It is especially timely because we have recently lost lives as a result of undue safe cycling in our major city centres.

National cycling strategies have been implemented in Denmark, Germany, the Netherlands, Sweden, and Australia and have made a huge difference with respect to safe cycling. They have saved lives and improved the health of their citizens. Infrastructure costs and greenhouse gas emissions have been lowered. They also have relieved congestion.

My bill has been supported by communities like Port Alberni and Courtenay in my riding, but also by the cities of Victoria and Toronto. The mayor of Ottawa just endorsed the bill, and FCM just supported an active transportation strategy, with the support of over 95% of its members.

The petitioners call on the government to urgently implement a national cycling strategy.

● (1015)

AMYOTROPHIC LATERAL SCLEROSIS

Mr. Darrell Samson (Sackville—Preston—Chezzetcook, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I stand in the House on behalf of the thousands of citizens who have signed a petition, calling on the Canadian government to fully back Motion No. 105.

Motion No. 105, which was unanimously passed in the House on April 5, 2017, called on the government to increase funding and national efforts to launch a strategy to eradicate ALS. Every year, 1,000 Canadians die from ALS, including the tragic loss of our former colleague the Hon. Mauril Bélanger in 2016.

The petitioners call on the government to fully back Motion No. 105 and to contribute direct funding to ALS research every year until ALS has been eradicated.

CANADA SUMMER JOBS PROGRAM

Hon. Candice Bergen (Portage—Lisgar, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to table a petition signed by Manitobans who are calling on the government to abandon its attestation requirement for applicants for the Canada summer jobs program.

The petitioners call on the Prime Minister to stand up for Canadians' freedom of belief and freedom of conscience, even if it is a different belief than what the government has, and to reaffirm those rights that Canadians have to believe differently than any government.

EATING DISORDERS

Mrs. Carol Hughes (Algoma—Manitoulin—Kapuskasing, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I rise to table a petition to the government concerning a pan-Canadian strategy for eating disorders.

The petitioners indicate that eating disorders such as anorexia and bulimia have the highest mortality rate of all mental illnesses, that the first cause of death is cardiac arrest and the second is suicide; and that children as young as seven are being diagnosed and hospitalized. They also reaffirm how important this is and the impact that this has on their families.

The petitioners call on the government to support Motion No. 117, which happens to be my motion. They also ask that the government initiate discussions with the provincial and territorial ministers responsible for health and all stakeholders to develop a comprehensive pan-Canadian strategy for eating disorders to include better prevention, diagnosis, treatment, support, and research.

HUMAN ORGAN TRAFFICKING

Mr. David Sweet (Flamborough—Glanbrook, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have a petition regarding human organ trafficking. In light of a continued global market for illegally harvested human organs, the petitioners are asking that Parliament and the Government of Canada move quickly to ensure that Bill C-350, which is before this House, and Bill S-240, which is in the other place, are passed, and that Canada does its share to combat organ harvesting and trafficking.

Mr. David Anderson (Cypress Hills—Grasslands, CPC): Mr. Speaker, there are increasing concerns about international traffic in human organs. There are two bills addressing these concerns, Bill C-350 before the House and Bill S-240 in the other place. The petitioners are urging the Parliament of Canada to move quickly on proposed legislation to amend the Criminal Code. This would prohibit Canadians from travelling abroad to acquire human organs removed without consent, and bar any permanent residents or foreign nationals who participate in this abhorrent trade.

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to join my colleagues in also tabling a petition highlighting the issue of international organ trafficking. There are two bills: one before this House, my private member's Bill C-350, which was actually proposed by Irwin Cotler in a previous Parliament, as well as Bill S-240, proposed by Senator Salma Ataullahjan in the other place.

These are important bills that would make it a criminal offence for a Canadian to go abroad to receive an organ harvested without consent. Petitioners are asking the government to pass at least one of these bills expeditiously, so we can move forward and be part of the solution to this global problem.

THE ENVIRONMENT

Ms. Sheila Malcolmson (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, NDP): Mr. Speaker, there is unprecedented awareness these days about the problems of marine plastics all around the globe. There are terrible images of whales choked on plastics and sea turtles entangled. As a result, we are seeing great citizen action in terms of collecting petition signatures in support of the motion tabled by my colleague, the member for Courtenay—Alberni. Motion No. 151 calls on Canada to adopt a national strategy to take real action on marine plastics. This would include regulations to limit the use of single-use plastics, as well as ongoing funding to deal with historic ghost fishing nets and other debris that originates in places other than Canada.

On Oceans Day we had a lot of people from Ladysmith and Nanaimo signing petitions, and we commend this petition to the House.

● (1020)

[*Translation*]

Ms. Anne Minh-Thu Quach (Salaberry—Suroît, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present a petition signed by nearly 200 people from across Quebec and Ontario to protect wetlands.

Given that wetlands have great ecological value and often serve as buffer zones in developed areas, the petitioners are calling on the Government of Canada to take a firm position to ensure compliance with the federal policy on wetland conservation, which aims to improve and preserve the environment so as to prevent increasing natural disasters, by designating the wetlands bordering Lake Saint-François as protected areas.

[*English*]

HUMAN ORGAN TRAFFICKING

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, it is an honour to rise today to present two petitions. I join with many colleagues in supporting two private members' bills that are currently before Parliament, Bill C-350 from the hon. member for Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, and Bill S-240, which started in the Senate.

These bills aim to make it illegal for Canadians and all permanent residents or foreign nationals to participate in the abhorrent trade of human organs removed without consent or as the result of a financial transaction. The petition is clearly widely supported.

ANIMAL WELFARE

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, on the second petition, I want to specifically reference the petitioners, who are a group of young women attending Balmoral Hall in Manitoba. They have signed a petition calling for a ban on animal testing. The petitioners point out that other jurisdictions, particularly in the European Union, which accounts for half the global cosmetic market, prohibit the importation and sale of cosmetics that have been tested on animals. Norway, India, and Israel have also banned animal testing in cosmetics. These young women call on the House of Commons to do the same.

Mrs. Bernadette Jordan: Mr. Speaker, I wonder if it would be possible to table a report from committee. I was not able to be here when you were requesting reports from committees. I would request unanimous consent to table this report.

The Speaker: Is there unanimous consent to return to presenting reports from committees?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

* * *

COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

FISHERIES AND OCEANS

Mrs. Bernadette Jordan (South Shore—St. Margarets, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the 16th report of the Standing Committee on Fisheries and Oceans, entitled "Atlantic Canada's Marine Commercial Vessel Length and Licensing Policies—Working Towards Equitable Policies for Fishers in all of Atlantic Canada".

Pursuant to Standing Order 109, the committee requests that the government table a comprehensive response to the report.

I would like to thank all committee members for their work on this. It is a unanimous report. We are very excited to present this, and look forward to a great response from the government.

QUESTIONS PASSED AS ORDERS FOR RETURNS

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, if a revised response to Question No. 1699, originally tabled on June 11, 2018 could be made an order for return, this return would be tabled immediately.

The Speaker: Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

[*Text*]

Question No. 1699— **Mr. Blake Richards**:

> With regard to registered charities that indirectly fund Canadian political activity or campaigns through foreign or third party entities: what specific action to stop such funding is being taken by (i) the Canada Revenue Agency, (ii) Elections Canada?

(Return tabled)

[*English*]

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, I would ask that all remaining questions be allowed to stand at this time.

The Speaker: Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

* * *

REQUEST FOR EMERGENCY DEBATE

NORTH AMERICAN FREE TRADE AGREEMENT

The Speaker: I have a request for an emergency debate from the hon. member for Durham.

Hon. Erin O'Toole (Durham, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I make the request in accordance with Standing Order 52, with respect to an emergency debate on NAFTA, on trade with the United States, and on the overall special relationship with the United States, which is tattered at the moment. All parliamentarians should be able to speak to this before we rise for the summer.

We are quickly approaching the one-year mark since the commencement of formal negotiations to modernize NAFTA. There have been multiple rounds. All sides appreciate the tremendous work done by the Canadian negotiating team, but NAFTA has come to a standstill in terms of the negotiations. In recent months, in fact, we have being seeing setbacks and not moves forward.

If it were not already complicated enough, with the U.S. trade relationship being our country's most critical economic relationship, the president's misuse, I would suggest, of section 232 exemptions under the Trade Expansion Act for steel and aluminum has further clouded and complicated talks in relation to trade with the United States. The imposition of a 10% tariff on aluminum and a 25% tariff on steel runs contrary to the history of our great countries and the integration of our economies, and certainly clouds the negotiating table for NAFTA.

It is spiralling from there, because now we are a few days away from the imposition of reciprocal tariffs worth billions of dollars, which Canada is imposing as a retaliatory measure in relation to the steel and aluminum tariffs.

S. O. 52

We support Canada being strong in the face of unreasonable demands by the United States and the inappropriate use of national security exemptions with respect to commodities. Since the last war, aluminum from Canada has provided the body of the fighter aircrafts that both Canadian and American pilots have flown in defence of our countries, and in the defence of North America through NORAD. The unique security partnership has not been focused on enough to show how ridiculous the application of section 232 is with respect to Canada.

The reciprocal tariffs, though, will complicate all manufacturing industries in Ontario, because many of the component parts for assembly, whether it is in the auto industry or for companies like General Dynamics, use American steel imports. Already, on both sides of the border, we are going to see jobs at risk, we are going to see higher prices for consumers, and we are going to see the Canadian and U.S. economies becoming uncompetitive.

Why does this warrant a special debate under Standing Order 52? There are almost two million jobs directly tied to exports to the United States. Once our tariffs are imposed on July 1, there is the possibility that the President of the United States has already alluded to, of a 25% tariff on finished vehicles.

Historically, since the Auto Pact between our countries started free trade between Canada and the U.S., over 80% of the vehicles assembled in Ontario, in communities like Windsor, Oakville, St. Catharines, and Oshawa, have been for export to the United States. With just-in-time manufacturing, often parts and assembly have crossed our border in an integrated fashion as many as seven times before the completion of a vehicle. Tariff imposition of this nature would be devastating for the auto industry in Ontario, and after our resource industry, this is the most critical contributing sector to our gross domestic product.

There has never been such a looming threat to the Canadian economy than the threat we are looking at now, based in large part on a number of unreasonable and unfair demands by the U.S. administration. That is why we need an emergency debate.

It is late in the year and I know many of us want to get back to our ridings, but we owe it to Canadians and to all parliamentarians to have a serious plan articulated in this House by the government. With over two million jobs, every riding in this House is impacted directly by trade with the United States. Every parliamentarian should be be able to be part of team Canada. Team Canada is more than a hashtag. A debate would enable us to provide ideas, support, and proposals to the government.

● (1025)

Before we rise, it is also incumbent on the government to present to Parliament a clear plan on the reciprocal tariffs that would go into effect on July 1, and what plan will be in place if auto tariffs are imposed by the president. This debate would also allow the government to provide confidence to workers who are already being impacted in the steel and aluminum industries, and to provide a plan and a sense of calm ahead of the potential for auto tariffs.

This is about Parliament at its best, where all parliamentarians on both sides can speak to probably the biggest potential economic crisis we have seen in our lifetime. Parliamentarians need to be able to debate this in such a way that we can truly forge a team Canada approach. Canadians need to see their parliamentarians seized with this, because the House will not sit again until September and Canadians need to know that all MPs are concerned and will fight for Canada's interests.

● (1030)

SPEAKER'S RULING

The Speaker: I thank the hon. member for Durham for raising his request for an emergency debate. However, I am afraid I do not find that it meets the exigencies of the Standing Order.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*English*]

FIREARMS ACT

BILL C-71—TIME ALLOCATION MOTION

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister of Small Business and Tourism, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I move:

> That in relation to Bill C-71, An Act to amend certain Acts and Regulations in relation to firearms, not more than five further hours shall be allotted to the consideration of the report stage and five hours shall be allotted to the consideration at third reading stage of the said bill; and
>
> That at the expiry of the five hours provided for the consideration at report stage and at the expiry of the five hours provided for the consideration of the third reading stage of the said Bill, any proceedings before the House shall be interrupted, if required for the purpose of this Order, and in turn every question necessary for the disposal of the said stage of the Bill then under consideration shall be put forthwith and successively without further debate or amendment.

[*Translation*]

The Speaker: Pursuant to Standing Order 67.1, there will now be a 30-minute question period. I invite hon. members who wish to ask questions to rise in their places so the Chair will have some idea of the number of members who wish to participate in the question period.

The hon. member for Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles.

Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this time allocation motion will once again undermine our ability to debate Bill C-71, which is a farce. This is nothing more than political games and a public relations exercise, and once again it targets hunters and law-abiding Canadians.

I would now like to hear the minister's thoughts on a serious problem concerning indigenous peoples. Heather Bear, the vice-chief of the Ochapowace Nation in Saskatchewan, the minister's province, appeared before the committee and said that Bill C-71 is probably unconstitutional, that indigenous peoples had traditions, and that they did not have to comply in any way with the contents of Bill C-71.

How can we have two categories of citizens, law-abiding hunters and gun owners on the one hand, and indigenous peoples on the other, who claim that this bill does not apply to them? How can we ensure public safety when people ignore what we are trying to do?

[*English*]

Hon. Ralph Goodale (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.): Madam Speaker, the legislation was very thoroughly discussed in a committee of this House, and I want to thank the public safety and national security committee for the good work it did. It heard a great many witnesses, 26 altogether. It held five meetings, and had three further meetings to deal with clause-by-clause consideration of the bill. The committee amended the legislation in three specific ways. In fact, an amendment from each of the parties was successful in getting through that process. That reflects a very conscientious effort on the part of members of Parliament, not only in this House but in the committee, to listen to witnesses such as the chief referred to by the spokesman for the official opposition and to respond accordingly. Parliament has done its job in a very effective way.

● (1035)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Matthew Dubé (Beloeil—Chambly, NDP): Madam Speaker, when I had a beard, people used to get me mixed up with my colleague from Longueuil—Saint-Hubert.

Let us move on to more serious things, like this time allocation motion. During second reading of Bill C-71, the Liberals introduced a bill that the minister bragged about. I do not entirely disagree with him. We support some aspects of it, but we still have some concerns and questions about other aspects. The minister said he wanted to bring a balanced approach to firearms legislation in Canada. However, we know that this debate is very emotional, and understandably so.

However, at second reading, before I even had a chance to speak to the bill as the critic from the second opposition party, the Liberals moved a time allocation motion. Now, after only a few hours of debate, they come back with yet another time allocation motion.

The Liberals say that they take very seriously the concerns of victims who are calling for more control over firearms and those of firearms owners, who have questions about some of the provisions in the bill.

If we want to have a healthy debate on this difficult and complex issue in Canada, why move a time allocation motion? Why not truly take the time to listen to parliamentarians as they share the concerns of their constituents?

[*English*]

Hon. Ralph Goodale: Madam Speaker, indeed a very substantial amount of time has been taken. I would remind hon. members that the content of Bill C-71 was included in the election campaign of 2015 in great detail. The proposals were laid out in the election platform. That was the subject of a complete campaign, and in fact endorsed by Canadians in general as a result of the election.

In terms of the legislation now specifically before the House, which reflects very faithfully what was in the campaign platform, we tried to call this bill twice at second reading and ran into parliamentary shenanigans which delayed or diverted the discussion onto something else so we could not get to this subject matter. When we were finally able to get to the subject matter, there were six hours of debate at second reading. Then the bill went to committee. There were five meetings in the committee. There were 26 witnesses. There were three more meetings to deal with clause-by-clause consideration. Three amendments were adopted.

Now there will be five more hours of debate at report stage and five more hours of debate at third reading. That will provide ample opportunity for members of Parliament to reflect their views and the views of their constituents.

Mr. Robert Sopuck (Dauphin—Swan River—Neepawa, CPC): Madam Speaker, it is quite clear this is the backdoor gun registry coming back. Under Bill C-71, if a firearms owner sells a firearm to another individual, he or she would have to call a registrar and that purchase would now be registered. Even though both individuals have a valid possession and acquisition licence and show that they are valid, they would still have to call the registrar to have that purchase registered.

It is quite clear from the research done on the old Liberal firearms registry that law-abiding citizens complied with it. I certainly did. However, at the same time, there was zero evidence it reduced crime. On the other hand, we have Bill C-75, where the Liberals would be making punishment for violent crimes and criminals more lenient, while at the same time, under Bill C-71, they would be punishing law-abiding citizens. In the Liberal world, it is far easier to punish law-abiding citizens because they obey the law and the criminals do not. Why this dichotomy? Why are criminals treated better than law-abiding citizens under the Liberal government?

● (1040)

Hon. Ralph Goodale: Madam Speaker, I fundamentally disagree with the premise of the hon. member's question.

The issue of it being a registry or not was very thoroughly discussed in the parliamentary committee. I would note the member for Red Deer—Lacombe, a member of the Conservative Party, said in committee, "Everybody at this table agrees that this is not a registry." That is very clear, on the record, in the committee. Indeed, the committee went a step further and it adopted an amendment. The amendment says:

> For greater certainty, nothing in this Act shall be construed so as to permit or require the registration of non-restricted firearms.

That is embedded in the law. That amendment was accepted unanimously in the parliamentary committee. It was proposed by a Conservative.

It is abundantly clear that this phony fiction from the Conservatives that this somehow amounts to a registry in any way, shape, or form is completely, utterly, and absolutely false.

Ms. Rachel Blaney (North Island—Powell River, NDP): Madam Speaker, I thank the minister for being here to talk about this important issue. I just want to share with him how disappointed I am that we are again seeing time allocation on a bill that is incredibly important to the people of North Island—Powell River. This is something I have received letters of concern around.

There is one concern I have been hearing a lot about and perhaps the minister could please share with this House how he is going to address it. Right now, with a PAL, if someone has a gun that is not working properly, he or she can take it to the gunsmith to be fixed. With this legislation, that is going to change. That causes a lot of concern. People in my riding are concerned about having a gun that is live, that has not discharged a bullet. They do not know how they are going to store it safely, and they are going to have to ask for the ability to take it to the gunsmith.

This is something I am really hoping to see change before this bill passes through the final stages. I would like the minister to share with this House how he is going to address this very important issue.

Hon. Ralph Goodale: Madam Speaker, I appreciate the question, and the first part of the answer is that the transportation authorizations that are required under the legislation apply only to restricted and prohibited weapons. They do not apply to ordinary hunting rifles or other kinds of weapons that fall in the category of non-restricted. That is a fact.

The transportation requirements relate only to restricted and prohibited weapons. In the administration of that procedure, which will apply to the transportation of maybe 5% of firearms in total, the officials who will be in charge of the administration of the transportation authorizations, in fact, understand that service to customers is exceedingly important, that Canadians who will be operating under the terms of the legislation will be expecting that their requests for transportation authorizations will be dealt with in a conscientious and expeditious fashion. That is a reasonable expectation on the part of Canadians. The officials administering that provision under this law have an obligation to provide a high standard of service.

Mr. Rodger Cuzner (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Labour, Lib.): Madam Speaker, as usual, the minister provides great insight behind the rationale for the bill and the execution of the bill.

I want to go back to a couple of the comments that have been made on the use of closure, and the NDP members, in particular, saying that they have not had enough time to debate this. I share with the House that this is my 18th June here. I have been here in June as a member of the government and as a member of the opposition. This is typical of what happens every June.

I know we have members in our caucus who say that what the opposition is doing is terrible, that the opposition is tying us up and not letting us get our legislation through. We did the same thing when we were in opposition. I know that my colleague has spent more Junes here than I have.

As my colleague indicated, we ran on a platform. This was central to our platform, to rationalize gun legislation in this country. We are simply making sure that this is done. As well, there were three amendments accepted. We never saw amendments accepted under the previous Conservative government. Maybe the minister could reflect on the difference between the processing of legislation now compared to previously under the Conservatives, with their lack of consultation and their lack of accepting any amendments.

● (1045)

Hon. Ralph Goodale: Madam Speaker, this takes me back to the work of the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security which did a very conscientious job in looking at this legislation. Obviously, as members have reflected in the House today, this is a subject that provokes strong emotions on one side of the case or the other side of the case and it is perfectly legitimate and proper that those varying perspectives be brought to the floor of the House of Commons and brought to the standing committee for proper debate and discussion.

The discussion at committee was very thorough. There were five meetings to hear evidence and receive briefs. Twenty-six witnesses were called. The committee then went into clause-by-clause consideration and spent three more days dealing with Bill C-71 clause by clause. In the course of that, the committee adopted three very useful amendments. One enhances the process of background checks. One deals with the authorizations that are required with respect to the verification of licences on purchases. That one, incidentally, came from the NDP and it was a very useful amendment to expedite that process.

The committee did its work. It studied the bill and reflected on what needed to be improved. It made those improvements and we are now at report stage and soon at third reading.

Mr. Bob Zimmer (Prince George—Peace River—Northern Rockies, CPC): Madam Speaker, I beg to differ with the hon. minister. We have talked about the backdoor registry and he has talked about that they made promises. We heard the member from the Atlantic coast that there was not going to be any registry, but this is from the actual legislation which says:

> provide the Quebec Minister with a copy of all records that were in the Canadian Firearms Registry on April 3, 2015 and that relate to the firearms registered, as at that day, as non-restricted firearms,

This is where the Liberals are actually giving a copy of what was supposed to have been destroyed. It was only preserved for one reason and that was for an access to information request from a man named Bill Clennett. The only reason that copy should still exist today is for that fulfillment, that purpose alone. The minister, through legislation, is making that copy available to the Quebec government. It should have been destroyed. He knows that. He knows that this is wrong, yet he is still bringing the legislation forward. I think he needs to back down and pull this out of the legislation. Honour what your promises were to the Canadian public that the registry was supposed to not be resurrected.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I would remind the member that all questions are to be addressed through the chair.

The hon. minister, please.

Hon. Ralph Goodale: Madam Speaker, the commitment that was made in our platform was loud and clear that there would be no federal long-gun registry and there is none.

The provision in the legislation that the hon. gentleman is referring to results from a legal and constitutional quagmire that was created by the previous government in the way that it dealt with instructions that came to the previous government from the Information Commissioner. The Conservatives were into a knock-down, drag-out fight with the Information Commissioner about the way that they were handling the long-gun registry long before the election and long before our government came into place.

We were stuck with a mess that we inherited from that crowd and we entered into negotiations with the Information Commissioner to stop the litigation, to stop the constitutional dispute, and to put the law of the country back on an even keel. We are doing that through this legislation, but we are not, I repeat, we are not, creating a federal long-gun registry.

● (1050)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Robert Aubin (Trois-Rivières, NDP): Madam Speaker, I will focus my remarks on the time allocation motion, even though we should be spending a lot more time on the bill. The irony is that the Liberals have just told us that the 338 members of the House will collectively have 300 minutes to debate the bill. That is less than the amount of time I just spent on the lead-up to my question.

A time allocation motion should demonstrate that there is a certain urgency. However, we have a government that has had a rather thin legislative agenda since coming to power.

What is the urgency? Why does the government now want to move so quickly?

Unless I am mistaken, when we return from the summer recess we will not be going into an election. We will still have time to debate such important and sensitive bills as the firearms bill.

[*English*]

Hon. Ralph Goodale: Madam Speaker, again, let me repeat the record of what the House has gone through with respect to Bill C-71. The bill got six hours of debate at second reading. It was then referred to the standing committee. The standing committee held five full meetings to receive evidence and hear witnesses; the members in fact heard 26 witnesses. Then they went into clause-by-clause for three further meetings, and they adopted three amendments to the legislation.

Now the bill comes back to the House for report stage and third reading. It was debated for several hours last night. That debate will now go on for five more hours at report stage. It will then go on for five more hours at third reading. That will result in a very ample opportunity for members to participate in the discussion and put their views on the record. The issues before Parliament require that we debate and discuss things, but they also require that at some point we take a decision and vote.

Mr. David Anderson (Cypress Hills—Grasslands, CPC): Madam Speaker, my colleague across the aisle continues to be as slick as used oil on this issue. The reality is that we have to register every sale, register every firearm, register the person who is purchasing, register the PAL number, and the information has to be kept for 20 years. That is a registry.

The second issue that I want to bring up is that the member keeps talking about the extensive consultation the Liberals have done. That is actually not true. The Assembly of First Nations representatives have said that, first of all, they were not consulted; second, this legislation violates their treaty rights; and third, they will see the government in court.

As well, there is opposition from Yukon. People have said, in their briefing, that unlike the provinces, Yukon has only one member of Parliament, which leads to situations where the input of northerners is often an afterthought and is not taken into account. This is the case with this piece of firearms legislation. Representatives from the Yukon Fish and Game Association said the same thing. They cannot get through to their member of Parliament. He will not represent them, and they have not had an opportunity to speak to the government about this.

Why does the member not just admit that the Liberals have failed Canadians completely on this? They have failed to consult, and they do not really care.

Hon. Ralph Goodale: Madam Speaker, I cannot possibly admit that because it is false.

First, on the question of the consultation, that was gone through prior to the legislation, before our platform was put together, during the course of the election, after the election, in the preparation of the legislation, and so forth. That information was requested some weeks ago in an Order Paper question. That question has been answered, and all the details of the consultation are now on the public record in response to the Order Paper question.

Second, I would underscore the fact that the content of Bill C-71 was embodied in specific promises in our election campaign. Those promises were thoroughly debated over the course of the longest election campaign in Canadian history. In fact, Canadians had an opportunity to vote on the content, and the result of that vote was clear.

Third, there were two further key channels for consultation. One was the Canadian Firearms Advisory Committee, which examined the content of what would become Bill C-71. I would also note that a few months ago we convened here in Ottawa a national guns and gangs summit, which dealt with a number of issues, including firearms. It was well attended, including by members of the opposition and almost all of the major organizations that deal with firearms, and we had a very good discussion in the course of that summit meeting.

Therefore, there were, indeed, extensive consultations.

● (1055)

Mr. Michel Picard (Montarville, Lib.): Madam Speaker, obviously my colleague confuses a registry with good common practices in business.

With respect to time allocation, in terms of efficiency, there is a misunderstanding of what it is to be efficient. Maybe the minister could inform Canadians and this chamber of the level of preparation, before getting to this piece of legislation, with the different stakeholders to show Canadians how well prepared this piece is to answer their needs.

Hon. Ralph Goodale: Madam Speaker, the purpose of this legislation is to keep Canadians safe; to add, in a measurable way, to public safety; to assist the police in pursuing guns that are involved in a crime or crimes that involve guns; and to make sure that, in the process of doing that, we are treating law-abiding gun owners across the country in a fair and reasonable manner.

The legislation involves strengthening background checks, improving the process for licence verification, requiring standard business record-keeping across the country, making sure that classifications are done in a professional and consistent manner, and ensuring that unusual movements of restricted and prohibited weapons require a transportation authorization. Those measures, taken together, will make an important contribution to public safety.

We have the endorsement of the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police and police forces across the country. We also have comments from a number of people representing fishing and gaming organizations. They, too, see the proposed legislation, although not unanimously, as reasonable measures.

We have tried to strike here a reasonable balance that is fair and effective for all concerned.

Hon. Mike Lake (Edmonton—Wetaskiwin, CPC): Madam Speaker, I am struck by the fact that the minister, usually one of the most bombastic ministers in the House, combative almost every single day here, is obviously very uncomfortable when it comes to the topic of time allocation. I wondered why. I went back and looked at some of what he had to say previously in the House. I looked back to April 30, 2012, when he talked about our government at the time. He said, "They have used closure to ram through their legislation more times in four or five months than most majority governments used in four or five years." Now, this is the third time in three weeks that he has used time allocation or given notice of time allocation. I think that might be a record.

On May 2, 2013, he said this:

> Mr. Speaker, with respect to the timing issue here, obviously it is unfortunate when debate in the House is curtailed by the use of time allocation or closure. That impinges upon the democratic right of members of Parliament to adequately consider matters that are before the House.

I wonder if the minister stands by his own words.

Hon. Ralph Goodale: Madam Speaker, what the member has to take into account in determining whether time allocation is appropriate in any set of circumstances is in fact how much time is being allotted to the consideration of the measure before the House. In this case, at second reading, there were six full hours of debate. In the committee, there were five full meetings to receive evidence and hear witnesses, and 26 witnesses appeared in the process of those hearings. Then there were three more meetings to deal with clause-by-clause, and that brings us to this point.

There were several hours of debate last night at report stage. Going forward, there will be five more hours at report stage, and after that, five more hours to deal with third reading. Altogether, that gives ample time for consideration.

When we compare those numbers to a lot of other pieces of legislation that go through Parliament, it is obvious that this topic is getting a very thorough airing.

Mr. Don Davies (Vancouver Kingsway, NDP): Madam Speaker, I have been in the House for 10 Junes now, not as many as my hon. colleagues have mentioned, but I have seen governments use time allocation. I would point out that time allocation does have a purpose in the House, but I want to start from the principle that citizens of this country send us here to this chamber to scrutinize legislation and to debate. That is the essence of democracy. The government can introduce legislation, and it will ultimately win the vote, but in the meantime it is our job as opposition to scrutinize, discuss, and debate to bring to bear other perspectives on the legislation. Therefore, I think time allocation ought to be used sparingly, and only when it is clear that the opposition is perhaps misusing that power and trying to be deleterious and hold up the government, which is not the case with this legislation. The previous government used time allocation some 100 times, and the current Liberal government is approaching 50 times of using time allocation, which does nothing but limit debate in the House.

On the proposed legislation, I personally support solid, reasonable gun restrictions in this country. It is important that we have reasonable restrictions, and it keeps our communities safe. However, I was talking to a constituent last week, Tom Chan, who is a lawful gun owner. His question to me was whether this legislation would preserve the interests of lawful gun owners or unduly restrict their rights.

Does the hon. member think that this legislation will be effective in keeping firearms out of the hands of criminals and those who would misuse them?

● (1100)

Hon. Ralph Goodale: Madam Speaker, let me repeat that we have worked very hard to try to ensure that this legislation gets ample time in committee and in the House, and I believe that, on balance, we have achieved that.

In terms of the substance of his question at the end of whether this will contribute to public safety, yes, I believe it will, in a number of ways, for example in improving background checks. I might say that on that topic, there appears to be almost universal support on both sides of the chamber. The idea of background checks, as I think he would remember, was raised in the House a long time ago by James Moore, who was a Conservative member of Parliament. He made a very strong case for enhancing background checks, and now we are doing, in effect, what Mr. Moore, the former Conservative MP, proposed.

By enhancing background checks, we will collectively, as a society, do a better job of keeping firearms out of the hands of people who have a reputation for violence, have criminal records, or are otherwise considered to be a danger to society, including threatening behaviour on the Internet. Again, I would note that as a result of amendments proposed in the standing committee, the provisions around background checks have, in fact, been enhanced and strengthened. One of the critical elements in protecting society is to make sure background checks work. The—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Unfortunately, time is up.

It is my duty to interrupt the proceedings at this time and put forthwith the question on the motion now before the House. Shall I dispense?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

[*Chair read text of motion to House*]

[*Translation*]

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

Some hon. members: Yea.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): In my opinion the yeas have it.

And five or more members having risen:

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Call in the members.

● (1140)

[*English*]

(The House divided on the motion, which was agreed to on the following division:)

(Division No. 869)

YEAS

Members

Aldag
Allesley
Arseneault
Ayoub
Bains
Beech
Bibeau
Blair
Bossio
Breton
Caesar Chavannes
Casey (Cumberland—Colchester)
Chagger
Cuzner
Dabrusin
Dhaliwal
Di Iorio
Duborg
Dugud
Dzerowicz
Ehsassi
Ellis
Eyking
Fergus
Finnigan
Fonseca
Fraser (West Nova)
Alghabra
Anandasangaree
Arya
Badawey
Baylis
Bennett
Battle
Boissonnault
Bratina
Brison
Carr
Casey (Charlottetown)
Champagne
Dubourin
DeCourcey
Dhillon
Drouin
Duclos
Duncan (Etobicoke North)
Easter
El Khoury
Erskine Smith
Eyolfson
Filmore
Fisher
Fragiskatos
Fraser (Central Nova)

Freeland
Garneau
Goldsmith-Jones
Gould
Grewal
Hehr
Holland
Hussen
Ien
Jordan
Khalid
Lambropoulos
Lamoureux
Lauzon (Argenteuil—La Petite-Nation)
Lebouthillier
Levitt
Lockhart
Longfield
MacKinnon (Gatineau)
Massé (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia)
May (Cambridge)
McCrimmon
McGuinty
McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)
Mendès
Mihychuk
Monsef
Morrissey
Nassif
Ng
Oliphant
O'Regan
Paradis
Peterson
Philpott
Poissant
Ratansi
Robillard
Rogers
Rota
Ruimy
Sahota
Sajjan
Sarai
Schiefke
Serré
Shanahan
Sidhu (Mission—Matsqui—Fraser Canyon)
Sikand
Sohi
Spengemann
Tan
Tootoo
Vandal
Vaughan
Whalen
Wilson-Raybould
Yip

Fuhr
Gerretsen
Goodale
Graham
Hardie
Hogg
Housefather
Hutchings
Jones
Jowhari
Khera
Lametti
Lapointe
LeBlanc
Lefebvre
Lightbound
Long
MacAulay (Cardigan)
Maloney
McDonald
McKay
McLeod (Northwest Territories)
Mendicino
Miller (Ville-Marie—Le Sud-Ouest—Île-des-Sœurs)
Morneau
Murray
Nault
O'Connell
Oliver
Ouellette
Peschisolido
Petitpas Taylor
Picard
Qualtrough
Rioux
Rodriguez
Romanado
Rudd
Rusnak
Saint-Amand
Samson
Scarpaleggia
Schulte
Sgro
Sheehan
Sidhu (Brampton South)
Simms
Sorbara
Tabbara
Tassi
Trudeau
Vandenbeld
Virani
Wilkinson
Wrzesnewskyj
Young — 168

NAYS

Members

Aboultaif
Albrecht
Anderson
Arnold
Barlow
Benson
Bergen
Berthold
Blaikie
Block
Boucherice
Brassard
Calkins
Caron
Chong
Clement
Davies
Diotte
Donnelly
Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona)

Albas
Allison
Angus
Aubin
Beaulieu
Benzen
Bernier
Bezan
Blaney (North Island—Powell River)
Boucher
Boutin-Sweet
Brosseau
Cannings
Carrie
Choquette
Cooper
Deltell
Doherty
Dubé
Dusseault

Eglinski
Falk (Provencher)
Fortin
Garrison
Genuis
Gourde
Harder
Hughes
Johns
Kelly
Kitchen
Kwan
Laverdière
Liepert
Lobb
MacGregor
Maguire
Masse (Windsor West)
May (Saanich—Gulf Islands)
McLeod (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo)
Motz
Nater
Nuttall
Paul-Hus
Plamondon
Quach
Ramsey
Rempel
Scheer
Shields
Sorenson
Ste-Marie
Strahl
Sweet
Tilson
Van Kesteren
Vecchio
Wagantall
Waugh
Weir
Yurdiga

Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)
Finley
Gallant
Généreux
Godin
Hardcastle
Hoback
Jeneroux
Jolibois
Kent
Kusie
Lake
Leitch
Lloyd
Lukiwski
MacKenzie
Malcolmson
Mathyssen
McCauley (Edmonton West)
Miller (Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound)
Nantel
Nicholson
O'Toole
Pauzé
Pellerin
Ratt
Rankin
Richards
Schmale
Sopuck
Stanton
Stetski
Stubbs
Thériault
Trost
Van Loan
Viersen
Warkentin
Webber
Wong
Zimmer — 122

PAIRED

Nil

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

* * *

WRECKED, ABANDONED OR HAZARDOUS VESSELS ACT

The House proceeded to the consideration of Bill C-64, An Act respecting wrecks, abandoned, dilapidated or hazardous vessels and salvage operations, as reported (with amendment) from the committee.

● (1145)

SPEAKER'S RULING

The Speaker: There is one motion in amendment standing on the Notice Paper for the report stage of Bill C-64. Motion No. 1 will be debated and voted upon.

MOTIONS IN AMENDMENT

Ms. Sheila Malcolmson (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, NDP) moved:

That Bill C-64 be amended by deleting Clause 5.

She said: Mr. Speaker, I am standing once again in the House to talk about the imperative for federal action to deal with abandoned vessels. Because of fishermen being forced out of the commercial fishing fleets, because fibreglass is reaching the end of its lifetime, and because climate change is creating different types of storms, all coasts of Canada are littered with abandoned vessels.

For 15 years, it has been clear that there is a jurisdictional hole that no government has been able to fill. As a result, it has fallen to coastal communities, which have had to try to jerry-rig solutions. My predecessor, Jean Crowder, as the member for Nanaimo—Cowichan, had legislation in the House that was supported by the Liberal Party when it was the third party, so we had real optimism that in this session of Parliament, we would find legislative solutions for abandoned vessels.

I think back to my start, when I was first elected chair of the Islands Trust Council, which is a regional government in the Salish Sea charged with a mandate of preservation and protection. We were approached by ratepayers on Parker Island, just off Galiano Island, in the Salish Sea. They had been trying for 10 years to get a government department to agree to help them with a wrecked barge from the early 1980s that had been sitting on their shore for 10 years. Every department gave them the runaround. They were told to talk to navigation, talk to environment, talk to land management, and talk to the Coast Guard. They were at the end of their rope, so on behalf of the Islands Trust Council, I went to the Association of Vancouver Island Coastal Communities conference. There were five other resolutions, not just from the Islands Trust Council but from local governments from all over British Columbia, the Sunshine Coast, and the Vancouver Island area that were facing the same problem, and we were all at the end of our rope.

We were able to bring together solutions. We said, "Let us get together and design what would be a good fit." We looked to Washington state, which has had a very successful abandoned vessel program operating since the early part of this century and lots of working experience. We passed resolutions. The AVICC did, as did the Union of B.C. Municipalities. It became a big election issue in my riding, because with a huge, 100-foot, hulking boat that the federal government towed into their harbour, residents wanted to vote on this. They were looking for an MP who would take the imperative to act to Ottawa. I was so honoured to be elected to do this work.

In the legislation I tabled in this House, I built on Jean Crowder's bill, and then I updated it a year and a bit later when my amazing staff team found a way to build all the solutions from coastal communities into my private member's bill. That was in April 2017. I was on the verge of bringing all those solutions to the House to debate in December, when, as we will remember, the Liberals used some unused tactics to block and then basically vote down my bill to prevent it from even being debated and voted on. It was not a possible outcome I could ever have imagined.

Because the transport minister said he was going to legislate on abandoned vessels, I really hoped he would just plagiarize my bill and bring my elements into his or at least recognize, when he tabled his own bill, on Halloween last year, that Bill C-64's proposed remedy of penalizing and fining for abandoned and wrecked vessels would not work unless he brought in the elements of my bill. They would deal with the backlog and also fix vessel registration. If we are going to fine an abandoned vessel, we need to know who the owners are to send them a fine or penalty. This has been said in the House before.

The two pieces of legislation would have worked well together. Members could probably recite the pieces I proposed along with me. They would deal with the backlog by putting in place a pilot program, a vessel turn-in program, as has been done with great success in Washington and Oregon. It would be kind of a boat amnesty. People who did not know how to deal with a boat at the end of its life could get it out of the water where it could be safely recycled. We could create incentives for fibreglass recycling and piggyback on the government's avowed innovation agenda. Let us do something to help us deal with marine plastics and waste fibreglass. Let us find new markets so we can recycle and work with local salvage companies to deal with this mess.

● (1150)

We need to fix vessel registration so boat owners can be more accountable and so the costs do not end up on the backs of taxpayers. And there is more.

I had all of those solutions from coastal communities and coastal governments in my legislation. When my private member's bill was killed by the government, I worked hard at transport committee to insert each of those solutions into Bill C-64.

To my great disappointment and despite the fact that so many witnesses said they wanted all those elements in the legislation, people on the ground like the Chamber of Shipping of British Columbia, West Coast Environmental Law, local governments, marina operators, people who all endorsed the solutions from coastal communities that I proposed to amend the bill, both Liberals and Conservatives voted all of those amendments down.

Here I stand with my final attempt to improve this legislation and to bring the solutions that would help coastal communities into the bill.

During the committee's study, we identified the fact that the government is not going to apply the fine and penalty system that is in Bill C-64 to government-owned property. We have a lot of examples on the B.C. coast and the Atlantic coast of government assets becoming abandoned vessels.

The member of Parliament for Courtenay—Alberni was involved in the removal of the vessel *Laurier* from Baynes Sound, which is a rich aquaculture shellfish area. A lot of jobs are dependent on it. Everybody was worried when the *Laurier* sank. It turned out that it was an old fisheries inspection vessel with many stories. It was also a Coast Guard vessel. It was a government asset that became an abandoned vessel.

On the east coast the *Cormorant* is an old Navy ship that has been languishing at the dock in Bridgeport for over 10 years. It too is an abandoned government vessel. A lot of my British Columbia colleagues will have seen the old wrecked BC Ferries vessel still with the logo on its side. It is a disaster. It looks like a ghost ship.

We have Coast Guard vessels, Navy vessels, the whole gamut on the coast of British Columbia. My amendment before the House proposed to close that loophole and make the fines and penalties equivalent, whether it is a government asset or a private vessel, in order to bring accountability and fairness as well.

From both a fairness perspective and an environmental perspective, this is our last chance to try to improve the transport minister's bill.

We take pride in the fact that this legislation is going to be voted on during the final days of this Parliament because of the tenacity of and pressure from the Nanaimo Port Authority, the mayor of Ladysmith, and Chief John Elliott of the Stz'uminus first nation. There has been a lot of co-operation and that has led to some success and has really put this issue on centre stage.

I am pleased to see the pan-partisan support for solutions on abandoned vessels. I remain discouraged that some of the solutions that were proposed by coastal communities, that would have dealt with the backlog, that would have worked with salvage companies to create jobs and innovate and recycle are not present in Bill C-64. None of those elements have any presence in the transport minister's bill. There still is a lot of work for us to do as a country to get this problem off the backs of coastal communities.

Voting yes to my report stage amendment to remove the clause that would exempt the government from the same penalties that it is putting on private boaters would be the one thing that we could do in these final hours of this Parliament.

For the sake of coastal communities, for small businesses, for tourism, for the coastal environment, I urge my colleagues to vote yes.

● (1155)

[*Translation*]

Ms. Anne Minh-Thu Quach (Salaberry—Suroît, NDP): Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague from Nanaimo—Ladysmith for her speech. Over the past three years, she has worked tirelessly to ensure that shipwrecks in Canada will be managed in a much more environmentally friendly way than they are now. In fact, right now, wreck management is not environmentally friendly at all.

The member worked hard to get the government to implement strict measures to ensure that resources will be available to recycle materials and identify wrecks. She wants the government to put money aside to manage wrecks across Canada. Finally, she worked to ensure that the bill is truly effective and not just a lot of rhetoric. However, there is still more work to be done.

The amendment that my colleague proposed seeks to delete clause 5 of the bill. Could my colleague elaborate on why that clause should be removed and how that would help the bill truly meet its objective of managing wrecks across Canada?

[*English*]

Ms. Sheila Malcolmson: Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague, who has been fighting to have the *Kathryn Spirit* removed from a drinking water lake in her riding since the previous Parliament. It is now six years, at least. Seven years, my goodness. We are tenacious. New Democrats are tenacious on this subject.

At the transport committee, we heard testimony that making government vessels subject to the same legislation that is meant to deal with private abandoned vessels would be really important. In fact, the manager of the Washington state program for abandoned vessels said:

> We do deal with larger vessels ourselves in Washington State. Just a couple of years ago we removed a 170-footer that was previously a military tug. We've done old scientific research vessels. We've actually done a couple of old Canadian Coast Guard vessels that were purchased by someone in Washington several years ago.

One of the amendments we proposed in committee that was voted down was to have the government take some responsibility when it is selling off a government asset, to make sure that the person purchasing it has the means to look after the vessel until the end of its life. That was also voted down by the Conservatives and Liberals at committee, although we had strong witness testimony saying that we should take that route.

This is our last opportunity to agree with my amendment to close the loophole that would make government vessels also subject to Bill C-64, to deal with abandoned vessels.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Anne Minh-Thu Quach: Madam Speaker, I am pleased to rise again.

At a meeting of the Standing Committee on Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, my colleague asked that the bill compel the Minister of Transport to intervene and take all the responsibility for wrecks, rather than giving him the discretionary power to choose not to intervene.

There are thousands of wrecks across Canada and they pose a risk of pollution and place a heavy burden on coastal communities. We therefore want the minister to be compelled to intervene, which is not the case under Bill C-64.

Could my colleague comment on that?

[*English*]

Ms. Sheila Malcolmson: Madam Speaker, the basic structure of my predecessor Jean Crowder's legislation asked that the Coast guard be named the receiver of wrecks. That was supported by the Liberals when they were the third party in the previous Parliament.

They voted down that amendment that I moved, both my legislation and then also the amendment at committee. We do hear from the transport minister that he considers the Coast Guard now to be the de facto lead, and so it is not necessary to change it in legislation. However, we are not sure that that same interpretation might be taken up by a future government in this House.

We still, with regret, are sorry that the Coast Guard has not been named the receiver of wrecks in legislation. We know that the good men and women of the Coast Guard, on the water, are doing yeoman's work to fill this gap, and under their own steam are taking a great deal of responsibility. We want to see them resourced and have that reflected in legislation.

● (1200)

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Karen McCrimmon (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport, Lib.): Madam Speaker, there are many arguments in favour of this bill.

However, the most convincing argument is the fact that Canadians are calling for the measures we are proposing in this important bill. Many petitions have been tabled in the House in this regard.

[*English*]

The vast majority of owners are responsible and dispose of their vessels properly, but even a small number of neglected or abandoned vessels can create hazards with detrimental and costly impacts on local communities. These vessels are not just eyesores. They can pollute the marine environment and damage shoreline infrastructure. They pose risks to navigation and public health and safety. They can also harm industries, such as fisheries, aquaculture, and tourism, local industries that are dependent upon clean waters and that contribute nearly $40 billion a year to the Canadian economy.

Especially frustrating for responsible vessel owners and marine facility owners is the fact that abandoned and dilapidated vessels can take up valuable mooring space, and this can lead to economic losses to both property owners and local communities. Of course, these vessels can be extremely costly to clean up, ranging from a few thousand dollars for small boats to millions of dollars for larger vessels. That is why Bill C-64 proposes aggressive measures to prevent irresponsible owners from abandoning or neglecting their vessels so that the costs and perils of cleanup are not left to the taxpayers and local communities. This legislation is the next critical step forward in our $1.5-billion oceans protection plan, our comprehensive, multi-pronged strategy to improve marine safety, promote responsible shipping, and protect Canada's marine environment.

Our existing laws do not allow us to comprehensively address all of the risks posed by wrecked, abandoned, and hazardous vessels, or problem vessels, including the ability to take direct action on such vessels. The wrecked, abandoned or hazardous vessels act would significantly strengthen our ability to address problem vessels by fixing these legislative gaps. With this bill, the federal government would be able to take measures to prevent, mitigate, and eliminate hazards. Bill C-64 includes new measures to prohibit vessel abandonment, strengthen vessel owner responsibility and liability, and enhance federal powers on two vital fronts.

First, it would require that owners bear responsibility for their vessels. This includes prohibiting abandonment and not allowing vessels to become dilapidated or hazardous. Second and equally important, the proposed legislation would make owners liable for the cost of vessel cleanup and proper disposal.

[*Translation*]

Furthermore, in conjunction with this bill, the government has started developing a national inventory of problem vessels, so that decisions about removing these vessels can be made based on evidence. This measure will also include a risk assessment, to prioritize the problem vessels based on the risk they present.

As part of the oceans action plan, we are also helping communities deal with the vessels that are polluting our coastlines and waterways. Canadians whose economic and cultural well-being are dependent on our water have expressed their desire to be involved in the solution. However, especially in rural areas, communities often lack the financial resources required to address the problem.

● (1205)

[*English*]

In May 2017, we announced the five-year, $6.85-million abandoned boats program. The bulk of funding being offered through this program, $5.6 million, is dedicated to helping partners such as other levels of government, indigenous groups, ports, and community groups to remove and dispose of the highest-priority abandoned or wrecked small vessels. In September 2017, we launched a complementary five-year, $1.3-million abandoned and wrecked vessels removal program. This initiative offers funding to assist in the removal of priority vessels and wrecks currently abandoned in federally owned small craft harbours. This program will benefit local commercial fishing industries and affected coastal communities.

Another way we are helping affected communities is by supporting education efforts. Not all vessel owners understand their responsibilities or are aware of their disposal options. Through the abandoned boats program, we are funding activities that educate small vessel owners on how to responsibly manage their vessels and how to make them more aware of available disposal options at the local level.

We are also supporting research on vessel recycling and environmentally responsible vessel design, which has the potential to, for example, further benefit communities through new business opportunities and reduce pressures on landfills.

I have spoken about some of the measures we are already taking to address wrecked, abandoned, and hazardous vessels, but new legislation is needed. The critical way in which Bill C-64 would make a meaningful difference is through prevention.

The Government of Canada is determined to take action on vessels that cause hazards before they harm the environment and become a burden on taxpayers. By being proactive, we can avoid, reduce, contain or control problems before they become bigger problems and become even more costly to address. The bill proposes new authorities to prohibit owners from abandoning their vessels before the fact.

Federal officials would be empowered to order owners to take action on vessels that are dilapidated or may pose hazards and are therefore at risk of becoming abandoned or wrecked. They could also impose significant penalties for noncompliance. We will work with affected communities that best know their local environments to confirm whether and what hazards may exist with problem vessels or wrecks and to identify the most appropriate actions to be taken.

Every effort will be made to thwart problems before our waterways are put at risk. Under the proposed legislation, vessel owners will be responsible for addressing their vessels or wrecks. When they are unwilling or unable to take action, we will be able to respond proactively and comprehensively thanks to the new powers contained in Bill C-64.

Even when we intervene, the owner will continue to remain liable for all costs and expenses.

This proposed legislation to address wrecked, abandoned, and hazardous vessels will increase the strength and capabilities of Canada's marine safety regime. It will promote responsible shipping on Canada's oceans and in our inland waterways. It will also reduce pressures on our local communities that in the past were forced to take owners of dilapidated vessels to court and incur costly legal bills or pay the clean-up costs themselves.

Bill C-64 proposes to provide a powerful new tool to go after vessel owners who act irresponsibly, those whose carelessness and neglect put the health and safety of Canadians, the environment and the welfare of local economies at risk. Coupled with other actions we are taking under the oceans protection plan to address wrecked, abandoned, and hazardous vessels, these proactive measures will go a long way in responding to the concerns raised by residents of coastal communities.

Mrs. Kelly Block (Carlton Trail—Eagle Creek, CPC): Mr. Speaker, would my hon. colleague care to comment on the report stage amendment that was brought forward by the New Democratic Party?

● (1210)

Mrs. Karen McCrimmon: Mr. Speaker, it is really all about developing a coordinated long-term, integrated solution. The development of this legislation has taken time. Dealing with individual small pieces of the puzzle is not quite good enough. It needs to be integrated and we need to have a full spectrum, a full approach, multi-government, totally integrated that will serve us for the longer term.

Ms. Sheila Malcolmson (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, NDP): Mr. Speaker, that is a fascinating answer from the representative of the transport minister. The amendment that New Democrats are proposing would have the effect of making Bill C-64 apply to government-owned assets. Right now the Liberals have written themselves an exemption and a loophole that we are proposing to remove.

If my Liberal colleague really does want to see a comprehensive and whole of government approach, as she just said, why would the government not vote for my amendment to close that loophole and make this legislation apply to government-owned assets as well?

Mrs. Karen McCrimmon: Mr. Speaker, it is a reflection of the work that has gone into this bill and into the oceans protection plan as a whole. The bill is very well balanced. It is well balanced against what the federal government will do, the potential of what provincial governments can do, and what local communities can do. That balance has been achieved through a great deal of consultation and negotiation with all the stakeholders who are interested in this issue. Finding that balance and that long-term, comprehensive solution is the direction in which we are heading.

Ms. Sheila Malcolmson: Mr. Speaker, I have to respectfully disagree with my Liberal colleague, the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport. The consultation we had at committee was that we wanted this law to apply to government vessels as well.

The member for South Shore—St. Margarets asked in the committee if the legislation covered government vessels and the Transport Canada representative said, "This legislation does not cover government vessels."

We then heard from probably a dozen witnesses who all said that this loophole should be closed. The mayor of Bridgewater talked about three different cases of vessels that were former government assets, or were government assets. They had been abandoned in his community and he wanted this law to apply to them.

In what world does the government's intention to have a "comprehensive solution" fit with leaving out a major contributor to the abandoned-vessel problem, all the old Coast Guard vessels, the worn-out fishing inspection vessels, the navy vessels, B.C. ferries? Why would they not be applicable to this law, as is in the case in Washington state?

Mrs. Karen McCrimmon: Mr. Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague for her advocacy and commitment on this issue.

When governments try to build bills and legislation like this, the aim is to ensure it is comprehensive and integrative, but that it also respects various jurisdictions and does not relieve the owners of these vessels, whoever the owners presently are, from their responsibilities. Therefore, we want to ensure we can clean up these vessels, but we also do not believe it should be the Canadian taxpayers and local communities that end up paying for it. We want to ensure we have a way forward that will serve Canadians and their communities the best way we can.

An integrative, comprehensive solution is the way forward. It is not always easy to make that happen. However, to have the taxpayer take on total responsibility for the actions of some irresponsible owners would not be the right way forward.

● (1215)

Mrs. Kelly Block (Carlton Trail—Eagle Creek, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise to speak to Bill C-64, an act respecting wrecks, abandoned, dilapidated or hazardous vessels and salvage operations.

This is an important bill. In fact, it was considered so important that it was passed at second reading without any debate so the transportation, infrastructure and communities committee could study it expeditiously. Now that the bill has been reported back, I am pleased that the chamber is taking some time to discuss its merits.

Since we are currently at report stage, I will comment on the amendment put forward by my colleague, the member forNanaimo —Ladysmith, but first I will discuss the bill in general.

I will readily admit, being from Saskatchewan, that prior to Bill C-64 being introduced, the issue of wrecked and abandoned vessels was one with which I was not overly familiar. I can honestly say that not once during the many round tables, constituent meetings, and town halls I have held in my riding over the last nine years has this issue ever come up for my constituents. Having said that, I completely understand why the bill is so important to members of the House who represent ridings along our beautiful coast lines.

As the Conservative Party's shadow minister for transport, I enjoy and appreciate the opportunity to learn about the concerns of Canadians regarding transportation matters, regardless of where they live.

The transportation committee's study of Bill C-64 was very informative for me. I truly appreciated hearing from the many witnesses who provided their testimony and the many stakeholders who met with the members of the transportation, infrastructure and communities committee to impress upon us the need for legislation as there was currently a lack of legislative clarity around this issue. If given royal assent, the bill will create a new comprehensive act, the wrecked, abandoned or hazardous vessels act.

If enacted, this new act will do a number of things First, it will give force of law to the Nairobi International Convention on the Removal of Wrecks, 2007. Second, the act addresses irresponsible vessel management and enhances federal powers to take action by the federal government. Third, the new act will give force of law to the International Salvage Convention, 1989.

The last point that I want to touch on with respect to this new act is that it will create an administrative and enforcement regime for vessels wrecked and abandoned on Canada's coasts with accompanying offenses and punishments.

Stepping back a little, by way of solutions for the issue of wrecked, abandoned, or dilapidated vessels off Canada's coasts, there are two schools of thought.

The first is to make the federal government ultimately responsible for vessels that become wrecked or abandoned on our coasts. To pursue this solution would be at a tremendous cost to Canadian taxpayers. Taxpayers should not be the ones to bear the financial burden of someone else's irresponsibility. Also on this point, if the federal government were ultimately responsible for all wrecked and abandoned vessels, there would be the potential that Canada's coasts could become a dumping ground for vessels that would have reached the end of their life cycle.

The second school of thought proposes a solution that I much prefer. It puts the onus for the removal and/or clean up back onto the offending vessel's owner and makes he or she responsible for the cost to do so. This is a more conservative solution. Individuals should be responsible for their own actions and individual vessel owners should be responsible for their property. When someone abandons or causes his or her vessel to become wrecked, either through neglect or willful actions, that person should be responsible for the vessels removal or the cost of removing it.

Additionally, another benefit of this second solution is that it will discourage owners of aging and/or dilapidated vessels from considering abandoning a vessel in our waters. While we do not want vessels being abandoned or wrecked anywhere in the world, the responsibility of the Government of Canada is to Canadians, to our coastal waters, and to Canada's coastal residents.

● (1220)

I believe that the bill falls more in line with the second solution I just described. As a result, I believe that Bill C-64 would have a positive effect on our coastal waters by discouraging owners of aging and dilapidated vessels from considering abandoning their vessels in our waters while at the same time setting up a system whereby vessel owners can be held responsible.

The second solution which I have outlined requires some basic information in order to be a workable solution. That basic information includes knowing who the owners are of each individual wrecked or abandoned vessel. Presently here in Canada, we are lacking this vital information. In order for the bill to work, it will be necessary for the Government of Canada to know what vessels are currently abandoned in our waters and who owns them. While the bill would not automatically create that list, it would be a step in the right direction.

Building on that, the federal government will need to maintain a record of vessels entering our territorial waters. Once it does that, it will be able to hold vessel owners responsible either through vessel insurance or through legal proceedings. Therefore, it is critical that the Government of Canada have the necessary information on vessels for this strategy to work.

Our support for the bill should come as no surprise to the House. During the last Parliament, there were a number of attempts through private members' bills to change Canada's legislation with respect to abandoned vessels. However, most of those attempts fell more in line with the first solution which I outlined earlier in my remarks where the federal government would become responsible for the cost of cleaning up and removing abandoned vessels, meaning Canadian taxpayers would ultimately be on the hook.

Giving credit where credit is due, my former colleague, John Weston, saw the problem with these proposals but also heard from his constituents that the issue of wrecked, abandoned, and derelict vessels needed to be addressed. In June 2015, he introduced a private member's bill that would have made it a criminal offence to abandon a boat subject to jail time, with fines of up to $100,000, and authorized the minister to sell a vessel that is deemed abandoned. Mr. Weston's bill would have discouraged the behaviour of abandoning a vessel. Building on his private member's bill, the Conservative Party's platform in 2015 included the following commitment:

> A re-elected Conservative Government will commit to supporting MP Weston's bill, and also set aside [funds]...to cover one third of the cost of removing priority derelict vessels.

Additionally, the issue highlighted by Mr. Weston's private member's bill made its way into the Conservative Party's policy declaration statement. As amended at the May 2016 national convention, section 128 of our policy declaration statement says, "the Conservative Party stands by its commitment to facilitate rehabilitation or demolition of abandoned and derelict vessels."

Earlier in this Parliament, my Conservative colleagues and I were pleased to join with all members of the House to vote in favour of Motion No. 40, presented by the member for South Shore—St. Margarets.

Finally, to address the report stage amendment that is currently before us, this amendment would remove clause 5 from the bill. I am concerned that removing this clause of the bill would unnecessarily contravene the principle of sovereign immunity which is recognized in Canadian legislation. For this reason, I do not support this amendment.

I want to indicate to all members of the House that my Conservative colleagues and I will be voting in favour of the bill. We need to protect our coasts and protect the Canadian taxpayer from the negative impact and cost of wrecked, abandoned, and derelict vessels.

Ms. Sheila Malcolmson (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I thank my Conservative colleague, who chaired our discussion at the transport committee and chaired it well. We had a good debate, and fantastic witnesses, whom we were pleased to have learned from.

If my colleague is characterizing my legislation, Bill C-352, as the first model she described where the taxpayer would end up picking up the bill for abandoned vessels, that was absolutely not the intention of my legislation. It was to designate a single agency that would be the first point of contact. It was very much like the Washington state model, where the whole focus is based on user pay. However, the key piece is that we need to be able to find out who the vessel owners are if we are going to send them a bill.

My feeling is that if, in the 1990s, the Conservatives and Liberals had not done so much to undermine the vessel registration system with their successive cuts to front-line services, Canada would now have a way of tracking who the responsible owners of those vessels are. Now we have a huge backlog, which is the legacy of that time of supposed cost-cutting. It is a good reminder that cutting services and laying off public servants can actually do more harm than good.

This brings me to my question. Why did the Conservatives let the vessel registry fall into such disrepair, and why did they close the regional offices in B.C. that were doing the vessel data collection?

● (1225)

Mrs. Kelly Block: Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my hon. colleague for the work that she did when she joined the committee for this study. This issue is something that she is very passionate about, and I recognize that she had attempted to introduce a private member's bill to address this issue.

The issue of wrecked and abandoned vessels is a real problem for communities along Canada's coast. The number is in dispute, but suffice it to say it is estimated that there are hundreds of problem vessels in Canadian waters today. I know that many communities are afflicted with this issue, and that many of them are small with limited resources to deal with the problem.

As for my colleague's question with respect to closing offices and not tracking these abandoned vessels, I cannot answer that question as I was not a member of Parliament back in the 1990s, which was the time frame she referenced.

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, like the member for Nanaimo—Ladysmith, we live with the fairly constant problem of derelict vessels along our coastline. They are a hazard. They are an eyesore. They present real risks to life and limb.

I understand the member for Carlton Trail—Eagle Creek thinks that we can always find the owners of these vessels and then get them to pay for the cleanup. I raised some of the problems with these abandoned vessels at committee. The hon. member will remember I attempted to put in an amendment for mandatory improvements to our registration system, and that vessel owners be required to have insurance. The response from the government members at the time was that we could probably deal with these issues through regulation. Therefore, I am going to vote for Bill C-64 with enthusiasm. I am pleased to see action finally happening on derelict vessels.

However, I share some concerns with my friend from Carlton Trail—Eagle Creek. The bill is not perfect, particularly around the issue of being able to track the owners of the vessels and being able to go after those who abandon their vessels and make them pay for the cleanup. It tends to fall to the municipalities even to know where to take the vessels. We cannot recycle a fibreglass vessel. We are stuck with hauling it to the dump. There are very significant issues with this.

I ask my hon. colleague from Carlton Trail—Eagle Creek to consider how we might be able to go after the vessel owners when we do not know who they are.

Mrs. Kelly Block: Mr. Speaker, as I said in my speech, this issue was not one with which I was overly familiar prior to the introduction of this bill. However, after participating in the study, I know how very important it is to coastal communities, and the negative impacts that abandoned vessels have. They negatively impact tourism, and the enjoyment of the coasts and coastal waters by residents and visitors alike. They create problems for our marine life as well.

With respect to a solution, while this bill does not deal with the specific issue, I was pleased to see that the Government of Canada created a program to help support cleanup efforts by communities. I look forward to seeing what is going to be put into the regulations as well.

● (1230)

Mrs. Bernadette Jordan (South Shore—St. Margarets, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am happy to rise today in support of Bill C-64. As a matter of fact, I am not just happy, I am thrilled to see this legislation before the House at report stage. After years of zero action by successive governments on the issues of abandoned and wrecked vessels, I am particularly happy our government is taking steps to respond to the pleas of coastal communities and address the issue that has plagued our coastlines for years.

The problem of abandoned and derelict vessels is sadly not an unheard of issue in my riding of South Shore—St. Margarets. From Bridgewater to Shelburne, or from Feltzen South to Woods Harbour, people abandoning vessels is not unheard of. It is also an issue not uncommon across the country, as many of my colleagues from British Columbia, the Great Lakes region, and many other areas can attest to. That is why I was happy to introduce my motion, Motion No. 40, in February 2016, which called on the government to develop solutions for our communities dealing with this ongoing problem. I am thrilled that the legislation we see before us today incorporates all parts of my motion.

Our existing laws do not allow us to comprehensively address the risks posed by abandoned and derelict vessels or problem vessels. Bill C-64 would significantly strengthen our ability to address problem vessels by fixing existing legislative loopholes while also empowering the federal government to take measures to prevent, mitigate, and eliminate hazards. Bill C-64 would also finally make it illegal to abandon a vessel for someone else to have to deal with down the road. This is huge, particularly in rural communities.

One only has to look to the town of Shelburne in Nova Scotia to see the impact an abandoned vessel can have on a whole community. The *Farley Mowat* was brought into Shelburne harbour under the cover of darkness, tied up at the town's wharf, and left for three years. The town owns the wharf where the *Farley Mowat* was left, and had no recourse to deal with this rusting vessel taking up space. The *Farley Mowat* sank, was raised, flooded, had to be pumped out continually, took up to a quarter of the town's prime wharf space, and was an eyesore in an otherwise beautiful harbour. The day the government issued the removal order was a day of celebration in Shelburne. The crowds gathered, with bagpipes, media, and of course cake to celebrate the removal.

This bill would increase vessel owner responsibility and shift the burden away from Canadian taxpayers and toward a polluter pay approach. The wrecked, abandoned or hazardous vessels act lays out a comprehensive legislative approach to addressing wrecked, abandoned, and hazardous vessels, from small pleasure crafts to large commercial ships, both foreign and domestic, in Canadian waters. In short, this bill would take us a big step toward ensuring the situation faced by the Town of Shelburne with the *Farley Mowat* is not repeated anywhere else in the country. Under our existing laws, the only two scenarios under which the government has the authority to take action on vessels are when a navigable waterway is obstructed or when the vessels present a pollution threat to the marine environment. That is it.

Our government knows that the majority of vessel owners are responsible vessel owners. In some cases, however, owners do not have the money to maintain, store, or dispose of their vessels. It is also not uncommon for individuals to take possession of a vessel thinking it has more residual value than it actually does, leaving them with an expensive piece of scrap. This bill would help us address the minority of owners in these kinds situations, as well as those who fail to properly care for and dispose of their vessels, so we can prevent them from becoming threats to our environment, local economies, and public health and safety.

Abandonment is seen by some as a low-cost means to deal with an unwanted vessel or the consequences of a wreck. It often comes as a shock to many Canadians to learn we have no laws to prevent this behaviour today. It is not illegal to abandon a vessel. I cannot emphasize that enough. Think about this: under the law, one cannot leave a transport truck at the side of the road, but one can leave a maritime vessel to rot at docks, beaches, or in harbours.

It is estimated there are hundreds of problem vessels in waterways all across the country. As some communities have learned first-hand, it can cost millions to clean up large vessels or wrecks. While these vessels pose particular risks to our coastal and shoreline communities, they are a cost to all Canadians. Taxpayers simply cannot continue to subsidize vessel owners whose irresponsible actions leave Canadians with a hefty cleanup bill. Costs to deal with these problem vessels are high, especially because we lack the authorities to proactively deal with them.

● (1235)

If we could intervene earlier, remedial costs would be less expensive compared to having to respond after an incident occurs. That is why Bill C-64 is so important. It would fill the voids I have just described by broadening the scope of hazards to include risks to the environment, the local economy, health and safety, and infrastructure. This would allow us to address risks beyond pollution threats or obstructions to navigation in order to better protect coastal and shoreline communities, the environment, and infrastructure, while placing liability squarely on the vessels owners so as to reduce the burden on taxpayers. In our historic oceans protection plan, our government committed to developing legislation to help prevent the problem of abandoned and wrecked vessels from happening and to take corrective action, at the expense of the vessel owners, if removal and disposal of a vessel is required.

One of the key aspects of this bill is that it would require large vessels to carry insurance or other financial security to cover costs related to the removal of a hazardous wreck. This is one of the proactive measures that would be taken to ensure that in the event of a vessel becoming a problem due to negligence, there is a measure already in place to protect communities and taxpayers from long-term financial damage. This proposed legislation would also provide ministerial powers to order an owner to remove and dispose of a dilapidated vessel left in the water or on any federal crown property without consent, such as a federally owned small craft harbour. It would also empower the federal government to determine whether a vessel or wreck poses, or may pose, a hazard. This would be done in collaboration with local communities and other stakeholders. Upon determination that a vessel or a wreck is hazardous, the government would have significantly more authority to take measures to address the situation than it does currently.

With new strict penalties for non-compliance, Bill C-64 would introduce new deterrents, helping to prevent problem vessels from endangering our waterways, costing taxpayers, and burdening our local communities. The effectiveness of this proposed legislation in holding vessel owners to account relies on the ability to identify them. That is why our government is taking action to strengthen vessel licensing systems so that Canadians can be confident in our ability to address any problems that arise.

In addition, we are working with our partners to address the costs of problem vessels over the longer term. This includes exploring options to ensure that future cleanup costs are addressed by way of vessel owner-financed funds modelled on domestic and international polluter pays approaches. These combined initiatives would reduce the burden on taxpayers while also enhancing protection of the environment, restoring trust for local communities, and ensuring the safety of the general public.

I was pleased to sit in on the meetings of the Standing Committee on Transport, Infrastructure and Communities during the study of this legislation, and I was pleased to see that all parties are in agreement that the time has come for the government to address the plague of coastal communities that are abandoned vessels. I ask all members of the House to support this legislation.

Ms. Sheila Malcolmson (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, NDP): Mr. Speaker, my Atlantic colleague across the way has been a real partner coast to coast in pushing for abandoned vessel solutions.

We are debating the report stage amendment, which would close the loophole that, right now, means that government-owned vessels are not subject to the penalties and fines proposed in this legislation. I want to take my colleague back to some of the conversations at committee.

It was the member for South Shore—St. Margarets who said, "I think this legislation covers government vessels, therefore, they're not allowed to become derelicts. Is that not boiling it down to the basic...? This legislation says you can't have an abandoned, derelict, or dilapidated vessel, so therefore the government could not have that. Is that not correct?" The Transport Canada representative said, "This legislation does not cover government vessels." This is exactly the fix that I am proposing today, so I am very much hoping for my colleague's support, a yes vote, to this amendment, because it would close the loophole that the member for South Shore—St. Margarets identified.

There were also witnesses who talked about vessels in her riding specifically, and I visited some of them last summer. The *Farley Mowat*, the HMCS *Fraser*, and HMCS *Cormorant* were all government assets that were abandoned in her riding. David Mitchell, the mayor of Bridgewater, said in his testimony to the committee, "Yes. I think that does make sense....in order to bring the ship up. If you're going to divest yourself of a ship, as a government, you should make sure that the person who takes on that responsibility can."

I want to know from my colleague whether she is going to support my amendment, which would close the loophole and fix the problem that she identified in committee.

● (1240)

Mrs. Bernadette Jordan: Mr. Speaker, I would like to take a second to thank my hon. colleague from Nanaimo—Ladysmith for her tireless work on this issue. I know that she has spoken in the House many times on the issue of abandoned and derelict vessels. As someone from a coastal community, I really appreciate all the hard work she has done on this.

With regard to her question on government-owned vessels, especially in my riding, she mentioned the *Cormorant* and the *Farley Mowat*. Those were actually not owned by the government at the time they were abandoned. They were sold, and therefore were not owned by the government when they were abandoned.

Second, I would like to point out that over the last couple of years, we have had four government vessels in my riding. We had the *Farley Mowat*, the *Protecteur*, the *Algonquin*, and the *Iroquois*, all disposed of by the government in a sustainable, perfect way. I think that is the way the government should go forward, making sure that those vessels are looked after. That is what the government has done in the past two years.

Mr. Rodger Cuzner (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Labour, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I really appreciate the discussion. I know that both these members have done tremendous work on the issue of abandoned and derelict vessels.

It is an issue that strikes near and dear to me, as we had the MV *Miner* off the coast of Scatarie not that long ago. The burden fell to the Province of Nova Scotia on that particular wreck. It was a significant cost to a small province.

To the question that came from the NDP on this particular issue, I do not know what the answer is. Sometimes we ask questions knowing what the answer is going to be. Maybe my friend and colleague, who I have so much admiration for on the way that she has championed this piece of legislation, could enlighten us. On the amendment that support is being sought for, are there any cases of abandoned federal vessels? Are we making a law, or looking for a solution, for a problem that does not exist? Is there a history of the federal government abandoning vessels on various coasts?

Mrs. Bernadette Jordan: Mr. Speaker, with regard to the *Miner* that he talked about, it was $15 million for the province to clean that mess up. That is money that could have been so much better spent somewhere else. I am really glad to see the legislation coming forward.

With regard to the member's question, to the best of my knowledge the government has not actually abandoned a vessel. It has sold them, and then people who have purchased them have abandoned them. That is where the challenge is. It is government vessels that my colleague has mentioned. Sometimes we see the Canadian Coast Guard logo on them. However, those are vessels that have actually been sold by the government, and then they are abandoned by the person who buys them.

Mr. Murray Rankin (Victoria, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I want to start by echoing words that we just heard from the hon. member for Cape Breton—Canso. He used the word "admiration" in reference to the member for Nanaimo—Ladysmith. Of course I want to shout out as well to the member for South Shore—St. Margarets. This truly is a coast-to-coast-to-coast problem, and it is lovely to see people working together on such an important issue. I live in a coastal community and I will have something to say about that in a moment.

The member for Nanaimo—Ladysmith has been absolutely admirable, to use the member's words, in bringing this to the attention of government and in pushing this forward. We have had this issue, since at least 2005, on the front burner in our part of the world and, I am sure, longer in Atlantic Canada. Thankfully, we seem to be getting somewhere with it. I say, "somewhere", and I indicate from the outset that we will be supporting Bill C-64. The amendment that my colleague has brought forward is something I would need to address as well because, while we support this bill, there is a real missed opportunity on so many bases here that it needs to be addressed in that spirit.

It never was brought to my attention, until quite recently, just how enormous this problem and challenge is. There are thousands of vessels, that is from the Canadian Coast Guard, that are derelict or abandoned from coast to coast. I have seen first-hand in my riding what that means. I have been with John Roe and gone through Cadboro Bay and again through the Selkirk Trestle area of the Inner Harbour of Victoria, and seen boats just sitting there, oozing pollution into the waterways; abandoned, in some cases, for years. For some reason, there seems to be this inertia, this inability to deal with an imminent danger that these boats have caused. Finally we have some tools that are on the table for our consideration.

One day, I had the opportunity to go with John Roe, who is the head of the Dead Boats Society, an admirably named organization, and, as well, the Veins of Life Watershed Society. He has been doing enormous work. He was appointed by the current government in a past life as a member of the chief review officer's people who do appeals under the Canadian Environmental Protection Act. I got to know Mr. Roe and I admire him. His tenacity resembles that of the hon. member for Nanaimo—Ladysmith. They are quite a team.

I had the opportunity to go and see these boats one day. Because the government was doing nothing, citizens in the community stood up and, on their own, at great risk in terms of potential liability, took action in Cadboro Bay. I had the opportunity to go out one day with Mr. Roe; with Mr. Eric Dahli, who is the head of the Cadboro Bay Residents Association; with Ian Hinkle; and with Commodore Wilkinson of the Royal Victoria Yacht Club. I am very proud of the Ralmax Group of Companies, which donated its equipment and its people. Here were citizens on the beach, taking direct action to deal with this hazard, when the government would not come to the table and do anything after years of asking. I really salute the people with that spirit that has made Canada great, actually getting involved, getting their hands wet and dirty, and trying to deal with this problem. I had an opportunity to get a sense of what it means and that was just one of the many communities around Canada. Hence the bill and hence the need to address this. I want to start by saying that this problem is enormous.

Second, there is an enormous backlog of thousands of abandoned vessels that are polluting our waters. Just how is this particular bill addressing that backlog? There seems to be no effort, to do what the hon. member for Nanaimo—Ladysmith advocated in her private member's bill, to pilot some sort of turn-in program to safe recycling facilities, so we could deal with these issues. If there were a registration fee for boats, as in Washington state and other jurisdictions like Oregon, and elsewhere in Europe, that could fund the program.

● (1245)

The government likes to talk about how much this is costing, and it has made a pitifully small financial contribution. It should not have to spend money at all. In the long run, as the economists would say, the cost should be internalized to the people who created the problem in the first place.

If I buy a boat, I should pay a fee. There should be a disposal charge, as we do with so many other consumer products. Why the government has not reached out to the provinces to assist in this regard is really beyond me. It would save money. It would save our environment, and it would get these eyesores off our coastlines all across the country.

The government's model essentially is to fine and ultimately to use criminal sanction, penalties and offences for owners of vessels. The problem with that model is that it will be very difficult to enforce. What if we do not know who the owner is, as is often the case? The registration number is filed off. We do not know who the owner is, and the vessel has been there for many years. How are we going to use the criminal process?

The Liberals talk about imprisonment and penalties of up to $250,000 and so forth. This is the old story of legislation involving the environment. We have fabulously large fines and we pat ourselves on the back for all the great action we are taking, but here is the punchline: We never get around to enforcing that. We never put in the resources, and we do not have the political will. It is nice, and it might scare a few people into action, but it really does not address the problem.

This is the problem that my colleague from Nanaimo—Ladysmith kept talking about in her private member's bill: the enormous backlog, the failure to have a vessel registration system for accountability purposes, the failure to establish a turn-in program to ensure recycling, and so forth.

I echo the words of the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport, who spoke earlier. She used the phrase "legislative gaps". There are so many legislative gaps in this program that I really wish the government had addressed them.

My colleague and the NDP made a number of amendments at the transport committee, almost all of which were defeated. One of them was about the vessel turn-in program that would deal with the backlog. The amendment about a dedicated fee to help cover the cost of vessel disposal, which Washington state has, was also defeated. There was also formalizing the role of the Coast Guard. It is like that *Ghostbusters* movie: "Who you gonna call?" Sometimes people can call the receiver of wreck, if they know who it is. People thought it would be simpler to just call the Coast Guard, but the Liberals seem to have abandoned that. They are committed to maybe doing something down the road.

The key "emperor has no clothes" issue here, which is addressed so clearly by my colleague's amendment, would be to deal with government vessels. I listened to the debate earlier today, and I was a bit confused because some people seemed to suggest that abandoned government vessels, such as old navy boats, ferries, and the like, would somehow be covered by the bill. I could not help noticing that the director general of environmental policy for the Department of Transport testified and said, "This legislation does not cover government vessels." I am going to believe her, and I am going to say that there is a simple fix: deleting section 5 with the exclusions at issue. Let us make sure that we have a comprehensive bill to cover government and private vessels alike.

In conclusion, this is a good start. It has taken a long time. I am pleased it is here, and I will support it. It just could have been so much better.

● (1250)

Mr. Don Davies (Vancouver Kingsway, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the speech of my hon. colleague, the member for Victoria, pointed out with great alacrity the benefits of this bill, but also the significant gaps. I would ask him to expand on two of those areas.

First, I cannot believe that we have legislation before the House introduced by the government that does not deal with government vessels. I would like him to expand on why he thinks that would be the case.

Second, for far too long, we, not only in Canada but around the world, have effectively regarded public areas such as our air, oceans, and waterways as public dumping grounds. There has been a lot of focus recently on ocean plastics, including at the recent G7 or G6 meeting, depending on your point of view. What a terrible problem that has been, as we have simply dumped things into the ocean.

Does my hon. colleague think that we need to have stronger environmental measures that would protect our oceans, more meaningfully educate people, and prevent us from using that important eco-resource as nothing more than a dump?

● (1255)

Mr. Murray Rankin: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member for Vancouver Kingsway had two insightful questions. The first was why the government would create any uncertainty about whether it is covered. My colleague is a lawyer. He would remember the crown liability and how it changed over time. The crown was never responsible under the law, until finally, in the seventies, the government made itself subject to the laws it passes. It is ironic that we are here again today.

There is no doubt about it. Section 5 says that "[d]espite any other provision of this Act...this Act does not apply" to vessels that belong to the Canadian Forces and to vessels "owned or operated by Her Majesty in right of Canada". It seems pretty clear to me. It seems that the environment policy person from the department was entirely accurate.

On the second, more profound issue that my colleague raised, we are using our oceans as a dumping ground. It is the tragedy of the Commons, as people have it, and Canada is not immune. It happens all over the world. It strikes me that when one dumps stuff out at sea, there is the Canada Shipping Act about that kind of pollution. However, when we have the eyesores oozing pollution right on our beaches and citizens have to take action on their own because the government does not take any action to help, it really is another kind of tragedy.

Mr. Rodger Cuzner (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Labour, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this legislation has an impact on my riding, which is very much a coastal riding. As the case is presented, there seems to be some logic there.

I just want to ask if my colleague could share with the House whether there has been any history or recollection at all of a federal asset that was beached and had to be reclaimed in some other manner. Is there any kind of history of that? I asked the hon. member for South Shore—St. Margarets the same question.

Mr. Murray Rankin: Mr. Speaker, I share with the member for Cape Breton—Canso a concern about our coastal environment. I know he shares it deeply from his part of the world, as much as we do in ours.

I am not able to answer the specific question about the frequency with which we have government vessels, but I am sure it happens. Why would it not happen? It depends how broadly government vessels are defined. It could be a tiny little tugboat owned by the Coast Guard perhaps that is abandoned somewhere, or a fisheries inspection vehicle. We do not have to think of gigantic military ships in order to see the problem that could occur. A little fibreglass boat owned by the Government of Canada could well be within that circle.

The fundamental question is, why would we have this conversation? Why is there an exemption? Why does the government not take responsibility for itself? Saying that there is no history of this, if indeed that is true, does not solve the policy question that underlies the question from the member.

Mr. Alistair MacGregor (Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it is a great honour for me to partake in today's debate, especially since I am speaking here today as a proud coastal member of Parliament who comes from a neck of the woods just south of the riding of the member for Nanaimo—Ladysmith. My riding, Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, and my colleague's riding together formed what was known as the riding of Nanaimo—Cowichan.

This is a problem that coastal people have been dealing with for far too long, no matter what part of Canada they live in. Abandoned vessels not only pose threats to our environment, and in some cases threats to navigation, but they are an eyesore. They cause real harm to communities that are trying to build up an image of a sustainable community, a place tourists would want to visit.

I spent seven years working as a constituency assistant to former member of Parliament Jean Crowder in the riding of Nanaimo—Cowichan. As a constituency assistant, I was often on the phone with constituents who were outraged at the runaround they were getting and the jurisdictional finger pointing. They had gone to the municipality and to the regional district. They had gone to the port authority, to the province, and to the federal government. Every one of those agencies basically pointed at someone else, saying, "It's not our problem." All those calls and the many years of problems building up prompted Jean Crowder to take action, and I will get to that in a moment.

I want to go over a bit of the history of how my particular community has experienced this problem. Right in the heart of my riding is lovely Cowichan Bay. I hope some members in the House get a chance to visit Cowichan Bay. It is a quaint, ideal little place on the coast. It has a great history of being a big industrial area that transformed itself into this great little community, which tourists come to every year by the droves.

We have had our ordeals with abandoned vessels. I will go back to the *Dominion*. The *Dominion* was a large Japanese fish-processing ship, which was towed to Cowichan Bay in 2007. The new owner of the vessel thought that he could buy it as an investment, sell it a few years later, and make a quick buck off it. Unfortunately, the *Dominion* stayed in Cowichan Bay from 2007 until 2013. It was filled with a variety of hazardous substances. It was subject to vandalism. There was the constant danger, whether from high tide or strong storms, of that gigantic ship coming loose off its mooring and plowing into other ships.

We had the SS *Beaver*, which was in such dilapidated condition that it sank in 2014. It still rests at the bottom of Cowichan Bay.

As a result of the lack of action, last year six derelict vessels were removed by the combined efforts of private companies. These companies were sick and tired of no government authority taking responsibility or having the resources to remove them. I want to recognize Western Forest Products, Western Stevedoring, and Pacific Industrial & Marine for taking on that initiative as responsible corporate citizens of the area. It affects their livelihoods, too, and they had the means to get it done. However, it should not have come to that.

I also want to give great recognition to Lori Iannidinardo. She serves as the area director for Cowichan Bay in the Cowichan Valley Regional District. A lot of individuals have been involved in this fight over the years, but as the area director, she has had the unique position locally of bringing so many stakeholders together, along with public and community forums, and pushing for action. Lori and Jean worked together hand in glove to try to address this problem.

Now let me turn to the efforts of Jean Crowder in the 41st Parliament. She introduced Bill C-231 in 2011. She saw a way to improve her bill, and it ultimately turned into Bill C-638, which had its opportunity for debate and a vote at second reading at the tail end of the 41st Parliament.

● (1300)

I will note that the Liberal Party at that time voted in favour of this bill, and among those members, there was the Prime Minister, the Minister of Transport, the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, and others. In fact, there are various ministers, parliamentary secretaries, and chairs of standing committees in the House today who back then supported this bill. We are happy to see Bill C-64 moving ahead, but as the member for Nanaimo—Ladysmith has so clearly laid out, there are a lot of gaps that her private member's bill certainly could have filled.

I am happy to say that after years of advocacy, New Democrats and the coastal communities have really informed our work, and all that work is finally paying off. We are very proud that the action to clean up our coasts and waterways from abandoned vessels are finally under way.

I will now turn to the 42nd Parliament, the one we are in now, and the efforts of the member for Nanaimo—Ladysmith. The first version of her Bill C-219 very much built on Bill C-638, which was introduced in the previous Parliament. However, after a lot of consultation with different coastal organizations and coastal communities, she really took their feedback, which is evidence-based decision-making and evidence-informed policy-making. She incorporated their suggestions, because these are the people who are on the front lines, and introduced Bill C-352.

One of the greatest privileges we have in this place as private members is our ability to bring forward legislation on behalf of our communities. What is really unfortunate about last year is that the Liberals denied her the ability through the procedure and House affairs committee, and then the secret ballot that we had here in the House of Commons, to effectively advocate on behalf of her constituents and various coastal organizations in this place. We know it was the Liberals, because that is where the majority of the votes are coming from, who denied her the ability to at least bring this bill forward for debate and a vote. They deemed it to be non-votable, and argued that Bill C-64 covered all the conditions. In fact, we can see that her bill was actually filling in the gaps that are very apparent in Bill C-64.

However, New Democrats do not give up when they face set backs, and so the member for Nanaimo—Ladysmith tried to work at committee. She brought forward a series of amendments to Bill C-64 to actually strengthen the bill and make it reflect the conversations that she had had. We wanted to implement a vessel turn-in program, create a dedicated fee to help the cost of vessel disposal, and we wanted to formalize the Coast Guard's role. The Coast Guard's main role is to guard our coast, but I would argue it is not only to guard against smugglers but also to make sure that our coastal environment is safe, sound, and environmentally secure. She tried to make sure that we could copy Washington state's model, because we do not need to reinvent the wheel. We have many other jurisdictions, one right in Washington state, and we could basically borrow the best elements from its program and transpose them here in Canada. She also wanted to try and give the receiver of wrecks the responsibility and accountability to determine the owner.

Every single one of those amendments was defeated by the Liberals in spite of all of the testimony that we had heard at committee. That is the real shame of this. The Liberals in the previous Parliament were fine to go along with the provisions that were included in this bill, but once they got into government, and flying in the face of the evidence they heard, they refused to go ahead with that.

The bill from the member for Nanaimo—Ladysmith was endorsed by the Union of B.C. Municipalities, the Association of Vancouver Island Coastal Communities, the City of Victoria, the City of Nanaimo, the Town of Ladysmith, over 20 more local governments, the Nanaimo Chamber of Commerce, Vancouver District Labour Council, and the BC Ferry & Marine Workers' Union. These are organizations and local governments that deal with this problem and confront it on a daily basis. To have those kinds of endorsements behind the member for Nanaimo—Ladysmith really speaks to her perseverance, and it is sincerely unfortunate that the government did not allow those.

I will conclude by saying that we are not going to throw the baby out with the bathwater. We will support Bill C-64, but I hope the government will at least listen to us and accept our amendment at report stage so that we can at least have some accountability for federally owned vessels, because that is a major loophole that exists.

● (1305)

[*Translation*]

Ms. Anne Minh-Thu Quach (Salaberry—Suroît, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for speaking to this bill on wrecks. There are some flaws in this bill. My colleague from Nanaimo—Ladysmith tried to fix these flaws by proposing a number of amendments that were unfortunately rejected.

In Bill C-64, the Prime Minister committed to investing $260,000 to $300,000 to assess and remove shipwrecks in 2017, which is a completely ridiculous amount, and $1.25 million for the four following years.

However, in my riding alone, dismantling the *Kathryn Spirit* has cost taxpayers $24 million, and it is not yet complete. This bill proposes $1.25 million over four years for thousands of wrecks.

Is that not a ridiculous amount? This is one of the flaws in this bill, in addition to all the other ones my colleague pointed out. Can my colleague speak to that?

● (1310)

[*English*]

Mr. Alistair MacGregor: Mr. Speaker, my colleague underlines a key point we are debating today. The funds that have been provided by the federal government right now amount to a drop in the bucket. Transport Canada has identified thousands of abandoned vessels from coast to coast to coast. The resources it is allocating are simply insufficient, especially when we highlight the cost of removing one vessel. That is just to deal with the existing problem.

The other problem going forward is we do not include measures in the bill to allow people to have a vessel turn-in program. Basically, for abandoned vessels in the future, people are going to keep on dumping their vessels. However, communities are where the costs ultimately land, and the costs are going to land on the federal government. We are trying to find a way to mitigate that going ahead.

The member is absolutely right. The government is living on a different planet if it thinks its current budget is going to adequately deal with this problem which so many communities across our great country are currently dealing with.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this issue has been talked about for a number of years. In fact, we had a commitment in the last federal election to bring in legislation. This bill is yet another fulfilment of an election commitment that was given to Canadians.

One does not have to live on the coast to appreciate the importance of our coastlines and waterways. The idea of having owners being held more accountable for their vessels is a positive thing in minimizing the potential negative impact on our coastal communities.

I am a little confused by the comments of my NDP friend. Is he suggesting that the government should cover all the costs in their entirety, especially when there are issues surrounding the owners of the vessels or when a vessel has been abandoned?

Mr. Alistair MacGregor: Mr. Speaker, no, we are not suggesting that the government cover all those costs. What we are suggesting is that the government be realistic with the actual problem. Of course, we have always supported that the owners of the vessels are ultimately the ones who have to be responsible, but in some cases it is absolutely impossible to track down who was last responsible. As a result, these ships continue to stay in these waters, continue to dog coastal communities, and the current budget simply is not adequate.

All we are asking is for the federal government to acknowledge the reality, to realize it is the government with the most means to actually take some meaningful action. Is the hon. member suggesting that we should just let the problem stay as it is? I do not think that is acceptable to many members of Parliament in all parties here whose coastal communities simply do not have the budget, the resources, or the means to effectively deal with the problem. We are simply asking for an acknowledgement of the reality, and for some support of the well-meaning, well-intentioned amendments that we tried for the bill.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Anne Minh-Thu Quach (Salaberry—Suroît, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to rise in the House to speak to Bill C-64, which addresses the issue of the thousands of wrecks littering Canada. I want to commend my colleague from Nanaimo—Ladysmith for all the work she has done. She has been working for years to stop the abandonment of wrecks on our coasts and to help free coastal communities from the burden of dealing with wrecks.

My colleague proposed several amendments in committee. She originally had a private member's bill that targeted all wrecks. Her parliamentary privilege to debate Bill C-352 was denied by the Liberal government, which forced her to go through the special process of a secret ballot vote. Each member got to deposit a ballot in a box at the back of the House of Commons to decide whether my colleague would be allowed to debate her bill. The outcome, as anyone could guess, given the government's majority, was that she was blocked from speaking on her own bill. The government simply refused to grant her time to debate the bill in the House, on the pretext that the government's bill covered all the same ground as her own. However, the two bills could have been complementary, as I will explain today.

My B.C. colleague's bill addressed a number of issues. Now, at report stage, she is moving an amendment that reads as follows: "That Bill C-64 be amended by deleting Clause 5".

This amendment would remove the exemption for state-owned ships. Bill C-64 does not currently apply to state property.

We want all vessels owned by the government, by all the departments, including military vessels and other assets belonging to the Canadian Coast Guard, to be governed by this bill. The fact that they are not is ridiculous. Washington State has similar legislation that includes abandoned state-owned vessels.

We hope the government will support the amendment moved by my colleague from Nanaimo—Ladysmith.

I rise in the House today because the *Kathryn Spirit* ran aground in Lake Saint-Louis, a drinking water reservoir, seven years ago, and the people of Beauharnois and the greater Montreal area have been trying to get something done about it ever since.

Groupe Saint-Pierre, a private company, acquired the vessel and towed it to the shores of Lake Saint-Louis at Beauharnois to dismantle it and sell the scrap metal. The people of Beauharnois and the mayor at the time were extremely concerned about that.

The current mayor continues to work to ensure that the ship is dismantled by the end of the year. Seven years later, we are beginning to feel some relief, but as long as the ship is still there then we are no further ahead.

Managing this ship has been very complicated from the start. It was not clear who to talk to about it. We had to juggle between Environment Canada, Transport Canada, and the Canadian Coast Guard under Fisheries and Oceans Canada. Every department under the Conservative government at the time passed the buck. In 2015, the Liberals took over the government, but it is still the same story, six of one and half a dozen of the other. The two successive governments were unable to grab the bull by the horns to ensure the safety of the drinking water reservoir. The population was scared because for the seven years that the ship has been there, there have been a number of freeze-thaw cycles. The ship has taken on some water through the pipes and as a result of being trapped in the ice over the winter.

● (1315)

What is more, there have a number of alarming situations that required last-minute interventions to patch up the ship to ensure that the water in the ballasts did not infiltrate the engine room, which contains oil. We asked many times for the list of pollutants remaining on the ship and up until very recently we still did not have it. Even the fire department of Beauharnois, Châteauguay, and surrounding areas still did not have that list on April 10, 2018, when a fire broke out and six fire departments were called to deal with it. Though somewhat ironic, it is mostly very stressful for all those who live near this wreck.

The bill before us does not meet all of the demands of Beauharnois and the surrounding coastal municipalities. That is why the NDP has been fighting for years to get a bill that better manages shipwrecks.

This bill is definitely a step in the right direction, but there are still some problems that need to be addressed, particularly the backlog of thousands of wrecks abandoned off Canada's coastlines. On top of that, the bill fails to introduce a vessel registration system for accountability, nor does it establish a vessel turn-in and recycling program. I was very proud to support Bill C-352 introduced by my colleague from Nanaimo—Ladysmith, which fills the gaps in the government legislation.

Getting back to the *Kathryn Spirit*, Groupe St-Pierre moved the vessel to the banks of Lac Saint-Louis in August 2011. Since the provincial and federal governments never authorized the company to dismantle the ship on the water for environmental reasons, it was never able to move forward, so it sold the wreck to a Mexican company a few months later.

Transport Canada and Fisheries and Oceans Canada kept passing the buck back and forth between 2012 and 2015. The ministers responsible just wanted to wash their hands of the problem. Despite our repeated calls, the Mexican company was unable to answer our questions. There was a language barrier as well as the time difference. It eventually stopped answering our questions and our calls altogether.

Then there was dithering and continual delays in obtaining answers from the Ministers of Transport Canada and Environment Canada concerning hazardous substances still on board. It was never-ending. It took years to get answers even though such access to information requests usually take about two months. Then we asked that there be only one party responsible, the Canadian Coast Guard, but the Liberals refused.

Ultimately, we want to know the location and condition of all such ships in Canada. That is why we are asking that registration errors be corrected and, as my colleague proposed at the Standing Committee on Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, that the administration do more than just the bare minimum. Companies must fully respect the law and its spirit to ensure the protection of citizens, waters, and our environment.

In the case of the *Kathryn Spirit*, the lack of registration prevented us from having clear information about the Mexican company that had taken over the vessel. A minimum of information was enough to have senior officials say that the vessel had not been abandoned and that the company was still responsible for it. This matter was bungled from start to finish.

In 2013, it seemed that contaminants were discharged and citizens were worried. In the end, it was a real shemozzle and the government said that most of the fuel had been removed. In 2016, the vessel was listing and cables were added. The government is taking a wait-and-see approach in this matter.

● (1320)

The government took action when there was a fire and finally realized that there had never been a response plan, even though the government had offered $24 million to the private company working on the boat. There were a number of shortcomings.

The bill does not allocate enough money to manage a single vessel like the *Kathryn Spirit*. The government is allocating $1.25 million over four years, which is completely ridiculous.

I hope that the government will review this bill and accept amendments, including the one proposed today by my colleague from Nanaimo—Ladysmith, in order to get this right and manage abandoned vessels in Canada.

[*English*]

Mr. Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague for her continued advocacy for our oceans and for this issue.

Clearly, the member is frustrated. She has seen the government delay. It does not have a plan to deal with the *Kathryn Spirit*. She has raised this multiple times in the House. The government has not adequately resourced the department to deal with it, never mind the fact that there are so many gaps in this legislation. It would leave a situation like the *Kathryn Spirit* unresolved.

The government has not dedicated enough money to deal with it. It still has not figured out a system, like Washington state, where a fee is contributed to dealing with these issues as they surface. In is a big gap in this legislation if the government cannot identify who the boat owner is.

Maybe the member could speak about the gaps with respect to the amendment my good colleague, the member for Nanaimo—Ladysmith, presented to the House to deal with this very important issue. It should have been looked at and considered by the government.

● (1325)

[*Translation*]

Ms. Anne Minh-Thu Quach: Mr. Speaker, there are indeed some gaps. We still do not know who owns these vessels because they are no longer registered. This is why my colleague from Ladysmith—Nanaimo presented a number of amendments to complement the Liberal bill.

My colleague proposed amendments intended to make governments more accountable; adopt the Washington State model, which would change the wait time for communities from two years to 90 days; set fees to help cover the cost of dismantling the vessels, like in Washington, where owners are required to pay to dismantle the vessels; and free taxpayers from this financial burden. Essentially, we should enforce the polluter pays principle.

The owners of the *Kathryn Spirit* have never been found. Groupe St-Pierre is the one that brought the *Kathryn Spirit* to the shores of Beauharnois, but it is not responsible for the wreck. On the contrary, Groupe St-Pierre is being given $20 million in taxpayers' money to continue to dismantle the ship, when it is the one who brought it to Beauharnois to get rid of it. Nevertheless, Groupe St-Pierre was awarded two successive contracts through a tendering process. Actually, one of the contracts was awarded to the company without a tendering process. Then, coincidentally, Groupe St-Pierre and a consortium were offered the dismantling project following a tendering process. This whole story is completely ridiculous from beginning to end.

We are at the point where we just want these wrecks gone without any negative impact on drinking water. Obviously, the government has fallen short when it comes to the administration and financial management of projects to ensure that these ships are recycled responsibly.

[*English*]

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I think Canadians would be quite pleased with the way the government has dealt with this issue. We have first of its kind coastal legislation to protect our waterways and coasts. Literally hundreds of millions of dollars have been invested in protecting our oceans and waterways.

Would my colleague not acknowledge, at the very least, that within the legislation we are holding owners of vessels more accountable for everything from removal to clean up and that this is a strong positive step forward?

[*Translation*]

Ms. Anne Minh-Thu Quach: Mr. Speaker, contrary to what the government member claims, there are still a lot of problems with this bill.

For example, it still does not impose any fees to help cover the cost of removing abandoned vessels. The Liberals also rejected the proposal to implement a vessel turn-in program to help deal with the backlog of thousands of abandoned vessels along Canada's coastline.

The government invested $1.25 billion over four years when the *Kathryn Spirit* alone will cost $20 million to dismantle. That is completely ridiculous. The Liberals are talking a lot of nonsense and are not fulfilling their responsibilities. The bill gives the minister discretionary power, but it does not compel him to intervene and fulfill his responsibilities.

[*English*]

Mr. Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it is a huge honour today to rise to speak to Bill C-64, an act respecting wrecks, abandoned, dilapidated or hazardous vessels and salvage operations.

Before I get started, I have to give a huge shout-out and thanks to my colleague from Nanaimo—Ladysmith for her perseverance and commitment to this issue. Before she was in the House, she was the chair of the Islands Trust. She brought communities together on this issue, because it is so important. She followed the great work of Jean Crowder, who represented the riding of Nanaimo—Cowichan. These are Vancouver Islanders who understand these issues from the grassroots. They understand the impact abandoned and derelict vessels have on our coastal waters and the impact they have on the local economy, ecology, and way of life. I appreciate their efforts.

In my riding, there has been much support for Bill C-352 put forward by my colleague from Nanaimo—Ladysmith. Qualicum Beach and Parksville have been very strong advocates for this bill, as has the Regional District of Nanaimo.

There was an incredible accident in our riding in Deep Bay. Three boats had been listing for over a decade. They were abandoned derelict vessels. The former member of Parliament for Vancouver Island North, a Conservative colleague, promised for 10 years to remove those vessels, but they sat there right through until the 2015 election. That same member voted against the bill Ms. Crowder put forward in the last Parliament. He said that he wanted more of a Washington state model. He was the party whip for the Conservative government and a previous cabinet minister, so he could have asked his government to pursue legislation based on the Washington state model. Ms. Crowder would have welcomed an amendment to support that model, because we know it works. He sat idle.

A boat sank, and when the divers went down, they found two more boats at the bottom. The communities desperately wanted the *Silver King* and the *Sir Wilfrid Laurier* removed, because they were threatening 60 jobs adjacent to that listing boat. They were threatening the Deep Bay Marine Field Station of Vancouver Island University, which has a centre for shellfish research they have invested $9 million in. We raised this concern with the federal government, and the Liberals sat idle, despite major storms going through.

We then decided to collectively come together: me; the MLA; Chief Recalma, of Qualicum First Nation; Bill Veenhof, from the Regional District of Nanaimo; and the adjacent shellfish company that was going to be immediately impacted. In fact, it would have been shut down for a year if any of the bunker fuel had been released from those derelict and abandoned boats, and the VIU research facility would have been shut down.

We decided to collectively come together with community members and go out on a boat and invite the media. I want to thank CHEK 6 news, *CTV News Vancouver Island*, and the *Parksville Qualicum Beach News*, because they came out, and it was their reporting that made the difference, with our community standing in solidarity. The former minister of fisheries and oceans, my friend from Nunavut, responded at that point, when he saw the pressure, and the *Silver King* was removed. The Liberals were still hesitant to deal with the *Sir Wilfrid Laurier*. This boat was a previous crown asset.

Again, my colleague from Nanaimo—Ladysmith put forward amendments to strengthen the bill to protect our coasts. One of the amendments was to prevent crown assets and assets seized and resold by the government from becoming abandoned vessels by legislating terms and conditions of sale and disposal. It sounds reasonable, but the Liberals rejected it.

On the B.C. coast, there are abandoned vessels from all over the place that still bear a government logo, whether they are from BC Ferries or the Coast Guard, such as the *Sir Wilfrid Laurier*. The Atlantic coast has a number of people with great intentions who are still purchasing surplus navy vessels, but they become great liabilities. The communities of Shelburne and Bridgewater wanted those conditions in the bill as well, and they were rejected. We raised awareness about the *Silver King* and the *Sir Wilfrid Laurier*, and we are grateful that the government responded at that point. I want to thank it for that, but it took a lot of pressure.

● (1330)

This could have been avoided. We could not even figure out who was responsible, because in this bill, the government still had not identified the Coast Guard as the sole receiver of wrecks. We were running around speaking to the parliamentary secretary and the Minister of Transport, the Department of Fisheries and Oceans, and Environment Canada. We were getting turned around, and no one was taking responsibility. That still has not been resolved in this legislation.

I will turn to some of the opportunities. When I was first elected, my colleagues from Vancouver Island and I banded together and went to the Minister of Infrastructure and asked that BC Ferries be eligible for the Building Canada fund, because under the previous Conservative government, it was not eligible. BC Ferries made that loud and clear. Despite the Conservative member from Vancouver Island North saying that it was eligible, it had been rejected on every application, because, it was told, it was not eligible.

We were grateful to the Minister of Infrastructure for changing the requirements and allowing BC Ferries to be eligible for the Building Canada fund. That has resulted in $62 million for BC Ferries, which Mark Collins, the CEO, told me when I ran into him in Vancouver. He was so grateful. He told me that he wanted to come to our riding and listen to my thoughts and concerns with respect to BC Ferries and the way he can support our communities. He also wanted to express his gratitude for our going to Ottawa and working with the government to create the eligibility that has supported all ferry users in British Columbia.

While he was there, I was able to talk to him and showcase Port Alberni and the Alberni Valley as a great opportunity for the BC Ferries experience program so that they can promote each other and work collectively to support the tourism economy.

We also talked about the incredible opportunity we have as the deepest port on the west coast of Vancouver Island, which is heavily underutilized. He clearly expressed to me that shipyards are coming close to capacity and that he wants to find ways we can work together. He wrote a letter of support after visiting the port. He wrote:

> BC Ferries is planning to invest $3.5 - $4 billion over the next 12 years in infrastructure and new vessels in addition to our anticipated $150 million annual spend on ship repair. The biggest constraint we face supporting our fleet is the scarcity of dry docking in British Columbia. Currently, two-thirds of our fleet of 35 vessels can be docked at just two facilities. Those facilities are busy and the opportunity for increased dry dock capacity in BC will be of great interest to BC Ferries and other coastal marine customers.

He supports the Port Alberni Port Authority and its hope for a new floating dry dock. The reason I bring that up is that it is an economic opportunity for people on the west coast to create more shipbuilding and maybe a place where we can work with abandoned and derelict boats. We would like to see the government work with all levels of government, the federal government and the federal Liberals, so that we can create those jobs and support a dry dock in our community.

After years of advocacy, the New Democrats are proud that our pressure is finally paying off and that we are seeing some movement on this bill, although it misses the mark on many things. It does not support a vessel turn-in program modelled on the cash-for-clunkers program for vehicles, which has been successful in many provinces. Without a turn-in program, we will not be able to deal with the backlog, which is hundreds of boats. We could create a dedicated fee to help cover the cost of vessel disposal, based on the Washington state model, which is an owner-financed fund dedicated to vessel removal that successfully took the costs off taxpayers, which is what we want.

Where I live, it is clear that most of these abandoned derelict vessels cannot be traced back. We do not know who the owners are. They change hands repeatedly. There is a housing issue where we live, and many people are living on derelict boats, in terrible conditions. These boats are being sold within the community, and people do not know who owns these boats. They live on them literally until they sink. We do not want to see a situation like in Deep Bay, where a boat is listing and threatening the environment and the local economy, and then when it does sink and we go to the bottom, we find three more.

● (1335)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I recognize that the legislation before us is somewhat historic in terms of ensuring more accountability for vessel owners to ensure that we have cleaner coastal regions and waterways. It is very progressive in holding more owners accountable so that we will see a positive difference.

Combine that with what I believe is a significant commitment by the minister responsible and the government to see literally hundreds of millions of dollars in the last couple of budgets going toward the protection of our oceans, rivers, and the environment as a whole.

Compared to the previous 10 years, would the member not agree that in the last two years, this government has accomplished a great deal? As the Prime Minister says, we can always do better, but at least we have taken a significant step forward with money and legislation.

● (1340)

Mr. Gord Johns: Mr. Speaker, that is the problem. We hear from one side about hundreds of millions of dollars, but it is $1.25 million over four years. It is not hundreds of millions of dollars the Liberals have committed to this program.

The member speaks about the oceans protection plan. Under the Conservatives, we saw a steep decline in fish where I live, a record-breaking decline. In the Somass River and in the Clayoquot, they at least had some funding from the Conservatives. Right now they get nothing from the coastal restoration fund. What are we getting? It is a gift of $1.25 million a year. That is absolutely appalling. This is not even a band-aid. It is absolutely disrespectful to say to coastal communities that this is leadership, coastal protection, and moving forward with progressive policy.

My colleague from Nanaimo—Ladysmith brought forward 13 amendments. The Liberals shot down 12 of them. They were progressive amendments. They would have taken the burden off the taxpayer. They would have corrected issues when we did not know who the owner of a boat was, because there would be a fund to take care of that. Just going after boat owners when we do not know who they are most of the time is not responsible. That is not progressive policy.

Ms. Sheila Malcolmson (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, NDP): Mr. Speaker, we have been hearing some resistance from the Liberal side to the idea of our amendment, which we are debating right now, which would close the loophole that prevents government-owned vessels from having the same penalties and fines applied to them that private vessels are subject to, on the basis that this is a phantom idea. For members who have joined the House recently, we named about four different vessels, in the town of Bridgewater alone, that were government assets that became abandoned.

I wonder if my colleague is familiar with the story of the MV *Sun Sea*. It was a boat that came to Canada's shores carrying refugees. The Canada Border Services Agency took legal custodianship of the vessel. It tried to sell it but could not find a buyer. That was in the news very recently. The government now has spent close to one million dollars just to store and maintain the vessel, let alone dismantle it.

Closer to home, in my colleague's riding, the *Sir Wilfrid Laurier* was a famous vessel that sank and had to be pulled out. Again, it was a government asset. It was an RCMP patrol vessel. It was a Royal Canadian Navy vessel. It was a fisheries patrol ship and then finally a fisheries protection vessel. That is an example of a crown asset that then became a pollution risk in my colleague's riding. I would like to hear his thoughts on that.

Mr. Gord Johns: Mr. Speaker, when I think about the *Sir Wilfrid Laurier*, it was a perfect example of our not being able to identify who the owner was. There was a great story in *The Vancouver Sun*. When we traced it back, the individual who owned it had just come out of jail. We traced it to that source, but we still could not confirm it. It was very hazy.

This is an iconic Canadian vessel. Canadians were proud of this vessel, but they certainly were not proud of it being in Deep Bay, listing, ready to take out 60 jobs, and sitting on the bottom of the ocean, which would have cost millions of dollars to go after. The Liberals dropped the ball. They could have fixed this. The government should be taking responsibility for the boats it sells.

● (1345)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): Is the House ready for the question?

Some hon. members: Question.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): The question is on Motion No. 1. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

Some hon. members: Yea.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): In my opinion the nays have it.

And five or more members having risen:

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): Pursuant to order made on Tuesday, May 29 the division on the motion stands deferred until later this day at the expiry of the time provided for oral questions.

* * *

FIREARMS ACT

The House resumed from June 18 consideration of Bill C-71, An Act to amend certain Acts and Regulations in relation to firearms, as reported (with amendments) from the committee, and of the motions in Group No. 1.

Mr. Mark Holland (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is an honour to rise in this place to talk once again about the important public safety measures being brought forward in Bill C-71. At the top, I want to talk about the tone of this debate and some of the messages and rhetoric.

It is important we have that push, that thrust and parry that occurs in debate and on issues. However, unfortunately my inbox has been filled with enormous hate, including death threats over this issue, which is deeply disturbing and entirely inappropriate. Therefore, we really have to watch the tenor of our debate. This is about public safety and about working together to make our communities safer. We may have differences in approach, but those kinds of messages and death threats certainly have no place in our public discourse, and have been enormously disappointing.

Unfortunately, we have a serious problem in Canada with gun violence. Only a brief couple of weeks ago, at the Pickering ribfest, a shooting terrorized our community. This is a very peaceful event that has gone on for a long time. Only months earlier, there was a horrific multiple homicide then suicide, a domestic violence situation. That is emblematic of what we have seen over the last number of years where Canada has had a decrease in the crime rate overall, but the gun violence in all of its forms has been on the incline.

Some have said that it was low when we look back at 2012, so the fact it has gone up one-third is no big deal because it was so low before. A one-third spike in gun violence, when we had made such progress to drive those numbers lower, is a big deal. It is a big deal because a one-third increase represents a massive number of new victims, people who should not have been victimized, people for whom we could have avoided that situation. Unfortunately that increase in violence has manifested itself in a number of different ways. It has happened with guns and gangs, but tragically it has happened in domestic violence situations. Not often enough do we talk about the increases that have also occurred with respect to suicides.

Therefore, we need to look at this issue from every angle. We have never held out that Bill C-71 is a panacea that will solve all the problems of gun violence, but it is an important part of a broader strategy.

I also want to talk about the fact that when we introduced everything during the election campaign more than two and a half years ago, we said from the outset that we wanted to work with law-abiding gun owners to ensure the measures were as little an imposition on them as possible, while at the same time achieve our public safety objectives.

Let us talk about what we ran on in the platform and what is here today. One of the things we said in the platform, and this has been done in the United States since the 1970s, was that when a gun shop sold a gun, it would have to keep a record of that weapon. It has to keep a record of who of sold it to. Some concerns were raised by gun owners and members of the House that this information might be misused. Therefore, we made a concession in the platform, which is in the bill, that someone had to have lawful access to get that information. In other words, the only way that information could be obtained from a gun store was if it would help an investigation and help catch a criminal. It would allow a police office to go to a gun store, say a gun was involved in a crime, and ask who the gun was sold to. The only way the officer could get that information would be if it could be demonstrated, through judicial access, that in fact that information would help solve a crime. It is behind a firewall.

Unimaginably, the Conservatives have called this a "gun registry". That is a piece of fantastical imagination and is on the level of believing in unicorns. The reality is that this information can only accessed by police to solve crimes. To describe it in any other way is frankly dishonest and it does this debate no service.

Another thing we ran on as part of our platform in the campaign was that when people were transporting a prohibited or restricted weapon, they would require a free permit to ensure they had authorization to take weapon wherever they would be going. a free permit. In this instance we are not talking about hunting rifles or shotguns; we are talking about high-powered semi-automatic rifles and handguns. We are talking about a class of weapon that is very strictly controlled.

● (1350)

We listened to the gun community. We listened particularly to sports shooters and others. They said that if they were taking it to their gun club directly and they were pulled over by the police for something else, then it would be self-evident they were going to their club and they should not require that authorization to transport. We thought that was a fair point, so we changed what we put in the platform and made that concession so it would only be required when they took their guns somewhere other than a gun club.

Some people have suggested that it should only be a person's own gun club, but we heard from sports shooters. They said that would be a great imposition. When they are competing in tournaments, they are not going to given the opportunity to visit multiple locations. They will have to get a permit all the time, which would be an enormous imposition for people who were doing this as a sport, as an example, or for Olympians. This is why we allow people within the province to drive to any gun club and not require an authorization to transport.

However, in the fewer than 10% of instances when people are taking their guns somewhere other than a gun club, then they are required to get a free permit to demonstrate they are taking them where they should be taking them. By the way, the permits can be emailed to them and they can show it as a PDF. Some people asked why they should do that. There are a couple of very important reasons for this.

If we look at the rules today and do a hot map of any city in Canada, not having that provision means a person can have a prohibited or restricted weapon in the car at all times and be able to explain to police that he or she is taking it somewhere. The individual is allowed to take it to so many places that effectively there is no restriction on driving around with a handgun, a high-powered semi-automatic rifle, or even a fully automatic prohibited weapon in their car.

We have heard from the OPP and the RCMP, and certainly we have heard very clearly from the chiefs of police, that there have been many instances where police officers have pulled people over for one offence and have noticed a prohibited or restricted weapon in their car. The individuals in question are not going to a gun range, the officers cannot figure out where they are going and there is nothing the officers can do. Therefore, police say it is important to have that authorization to transport, which is free and can be provided as a PDF. It provides an important public safety instrument. By the way, again, that represents only less than 10% of the cases. It certainly does not make sense to me that people are sending me death threats over this kind of measure.

As well, the bill would do a couple of other important things. It was actually Jason Kenney, a former member of the House, who talked about the need to have expanded background checks. The reason for this is that unfortunately in a five-year window, somebody's violent history may not be captured. I have spoken in the House before about instances where unfortunately, and all too often, women trapped in violent relationships do not report that violence and do not come forward. It can drag on for years. When the woman finally escapes that relationship, the individual in question can go in and buy guns legally because his violent history with women has not been reported on for more than five years. That person is then able to purchase weapons and unfortunately shoot his former partner dead. It has happened far too many times in the country.

Sadly, gun violence occurs with both registered and unregistered weapons. The measures contained in the bill, and there are a lot more than I have time to address today, do important public safety good to ensure we are a bit safer.

This is one part of the puzzle. We are putting $100 million a year into the guns and gangs strategy to build up our strength at a local community level, to make our communities stronger and more resilient against gun violence. The work we are doing to improve the situation at the border, of the illegal transportation of weapons into this country, is so vital. We saw so many cuts to CBSA and to the RCMP. We are restoring those cuts, ensuring that strength is present.

It is part of an overall strategy to make our communities safer, while ensuring we have as little imposition as possible on those who use firearms responsibly.

● (1355)

Mr. David Anderson (Cypress Hills—Grasslands, CPC): Mr. Speaker, there are so many things to challenge. There is a requirement to register every sale, every firearm, registrar the person buying, register the seller, register the PAL number, and keep the information for 20 years. Therefore, I do not know how those guys can pretend this is not a registry. I want to ask the member something specific about that.

Section 102 of the Firearms Act allows for firearms officers to review, seize, or copy any records, kept as a requirement of a business licence, without a warrant. Under the bill, businesses are required to keep those records. How does the member square that circle? It is already in the previous legislation that firearms officers can demand that information without a warrant. The Liberals are claiming that they are going to need a warrant to go into businesses to get the information that will basically form the new registry.

Mr. Mark Holland: Mr. Speaker, the member can imagine the circumstance today where there is no requirement for a store to keep a record of who they sold a firearm to. There is no requirement, but this bill would change that. I think that makes good sense, because most stores, I would say the vast majority, do keep records, but for criminals thinking of buying a gun to commit a crime, are they going to go to a store that keeps records or are they going to go to a store that keeps no records? By the way, when a person is committing domestic violence and has no connection to gangs, they would go and buy—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Mark Holland: Mr. Speaker, does the member know how many people have been shot and killed with legally acquired firearms where there was a history of violence? And by the way, her name is Lindsay Wilson. She was in my riding and she was shot and killed.

These situations are real, and our need to protect women in this country is real. This bill would do important public safety good, and it deserves an honest and real debate.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): The hon. member will have three minutes and 15 seconds coming to him when we resume debate after Oral Questions.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[*Translation*]

LIVE-IN CAREGIVERS

Ms. Monique Pauzé (Repentigny, QD): Mr. Speaker, the little-known live-in caregiver program fails to protect female foreign workers who come here to work as domestic help. They come here in the hope of making a bit of money and getting permanent resident status after two years. We do not see them in public, as they generally stay in their employer's home. They do not necessarily know their rights, they do not always know our language, but they are prepared to do anything to help their family. They rely on the goodwill of a single employer, without whom they can be deported from the country. Hon. members will agree that the employer therefore has excessive power over these women. These conditions create countless cases of abuse, violence, unpaid work, intimidation, and harassment. I am therefore honoured to sponsor a petition launched by the Centre international de solidarité ouvrière calling on the federal government to take action to guarantee better working conditions for these women. I urge everyone to sign the petition immediately and to be the voice of these women, who far too often do not have a voice.

* * *

LONDON WEST YOUTH COUNCIL

Ms. Kate Young (London West, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to work with the London West Youth Council, a group of brilliant and inspiring young people.

[*English*]

They volunteered their time collecting non-perishable food items for Anova, an organization that provides shelter for abused women and their children. They filled 23 large bags with breakfast items, which were then delivered.

I am excited to continue to work with my youth council, and to show them that there are many ways to be leaders of today.

● (1400)

[*Translation*]

Their passion and skill inspire me, as does the positive change they are making in our community.

* * *

[*English*]

CARIBOO—PRINCE GEORGE

Mr. Todd Doherty (Cariboo—Prince George, CPC): Mr. Speaker, summer is just two days away, which means communities in my riding are gearing up to host visitors from around the world at our world-class events. This Canada Day, the historic gold rush town of Barkerville will celebrate its 150th anniversary of the very first Dominion Day ever.

Summer also means the start of my second favourite season, rodeo season. This Canada Day long weekend, my home town of Williams Lake will host the 92nd anniversary of the greatest show on dirt, the world-famous Williams Lake Stampede. Visitors flock to the Cariboo from far and wide to enjoy world-class hospitality and several days of top rodeo stars from across North America competing in premier rodeo events. Just a couple of weeks later, just up Highway 97, Quesnel will be hosting Billy Barker Days and the 52nd annual Quesnel Rodeo.

"It's the ropes and the reins, and the joy and the pain and they call the thing rodeo." Yeehaw.

INDIGENOUS PEOPLES DAY

Ms. Yvonne Jones (Labrador, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize June 21 as Indigenous Peoples Day. National Indigenous Peoples Day is a day to celebrate and recognize the ongoing contributions of first nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples throughout Canada. This year, Canadians across the country will celebrate and acknowledge the rich culture, heritage, and contributions of indigenous peoples, and what they have contributed to our country, Canada.

On June 21, from coast to coast to coast, Canadians are invited to participate in events such as powwows, sport competitions, and musical performances, all that will highlight the rich and distinct heritage of indigenous peoples in this country. It is a day and an opportunity for all of us, both indigenous and non-indigenous Canadians, to learn about our rich history, traditions, and cultures of indigenous peoples. It is a critical step for all of on the journey of reconciliation.

I wish all a wonderful Indigenous Peoples Day in Canada.

* * *

COLUMBIA RIVER TREATY

Mr. Wayne Stetski (Kootenay—Columbia, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the 1964 Columbia River Treaty provided economic and flood prevention benefits, but also caused significant environmental and cultural losses.

Local communities and first nations were not consulted during the original negotiations. The people of Kootenay—Columbia believe that environmental priorities, including the restoration of salmon, must be incorporated into the renegotiation of the treaty. As mayor of Cranbrook, I helped write the report from local government on recommendations for the future of the CRT. Current negotiations must build on the important work that has already been done by local communities and ensure that first nations have a seat at the table. I urge and invite the federal government negotiators to visit our region, and really listen to those impacted so that we can get the best possible deal for British Columbians and all Canadians.

While the CRT will be 54 years old on July 1, my constituent Mary Shypitka of Cranbrook will turn 100 years old on that day. I wish Mary a happy 100th birthday.

* * *

INTERIM PLACE

Mr. Sven Spengemann (Mississauga—Lakeshore, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, over the past four decades, Interim Place has profoundly changed the lives of many women and children in Peel region by helping them break cycles of violence and providing an opportunity to build new lives free of abuse. I recently attended Interim Place's second annual purple tie luncheon, an event that focused on the role men must play in promoting equality and stopping gender-based violence.

I would like to thank Sharon Floyd, Julia Robinson, staff, volunteers, donors, supporters, and the entire board of directors for serving as powerful agents of social change in our community. Their hard work, commitment, and advocacy on behalf of vulnerable women and girls is an inspiration not just to our community, but to all Canadians.

On August 28, Interim Place is hosting its 7th annual Step Forward To End Violence Against Women Walk in beautiful Port Credit. I encourage everyone in Peel region to walk with us on that day to demonstrate our commitment to ending violence against women and girls.

* * *

HURON—BRUCE

Mr. Ben Lobb (Huron—Bruce, CPC): Mr. Speaker, summer is here again and it is time to remind all Canadians of the great things to visit in Huron—Bruce.

If someone enjoys theatre they should check out the Blyth Festival Theatre, Huron Country Playhouse, and many other local theatres. There are festivals like the Goderich Celtic Festival, Kincardine Scottish Festival, bluesfest, jazzfest, Music in the Fields, and Zurich Bean Festival, to name just a few. How about homecomings? Check out Lucknow, Chepstow, and Kincardine homecomings.

Outdoors there are beautiful campgrounds at Point Farms Provincial Park, and MacGregor Park. There is horse racing in Clinton, motocross in Walton, and dozens of golf courses, hiking trails, biking trails, kayaking, canoeing, hunting, and fishing. There are breweries, wineries, lighthouse tours, farmers' markets, museums, beautiful sandy beaches and the best sunsets in the world.

In one minute I cannot list all the great things happening in Huron—Bruce this summer. However, I can assure visitors of one thing. If they visit once, they will make Huron—Bruce their new home forever.

* * *

● (1405)

NOVA SCOTIA

Mr. Colin Fraser (West Nova, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as Canadians plan their summer holidays, I extend a warm invitation to visit Nova Scotia and discover all that we have to offer. In western Nova Scotia there is so much to enjoy. If one is a history buff, visit Port Royal, the oldest permanent European settlement in Canada, or visit the historic Cape Forchu lighthouse near Yarmouth.

If one is an outdoor adventurist, they can explore Kejimkujik National Park, see North America's darkest skies, or embark on a whale watching excursion off Brier Island in the beautiful Bay of Fundy.

[*Translation*]

If one wishes to explore one's Acadian roots, one can take part in the world's oldest Acadian festival in Baie Sainte-Marie or travel back in time to the 19th century at the Historic Acadian Village of Nova Scotia in Lower West Pubnico.

[*English*]

Or perhaps one would like to stroll through the Annapolis Valley's apple orchards, sip on award-winning Nova Scotian wines, and dine on the world's finest seafood. Whether one visits for the history, the scenery, or the food, one will experience hospitality that is second to none in beautiful Nova Scotia.

* * *

[*Translation*]

SAINT-JEAN-BAPTISTE

Mr. Richard Hébert (Lac-Saint-Jean, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, seeing as we will soon be leaving for the summer, I would be remiss if I did not mention Saint-Jean-Baptiste celebrations.

For a long time, Saint-Jean-Baptiste was a Catholic feast day. In 1834, it became French Canadians' national holiday. Now known as Quebec's national holiday, Saint-Jean-Baptiste is also a celebration of the culture and language of all French-speaking Canadians. They are a vital and vibrant part of Canada's cultural life.

As one of Canada's founding nations, Quebec can be justifiably proud of its roots. It values openness, equality, its social safety net, and its arts scene. Its music, literature, films, and fine arts are a testament to its rich cultural heritage.

I would like to wish all Quebeckers, as well as francophones across the country, a happy Saint-Jean-Baptiste. Let us proclaim loud and clear that we are proud of who we have become.

* * *

[*English*]

NOT IN MY CITY

Mr. Arnold Viersen (Peace River—Westlock, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to highlight Not In My City, an initiative championed by a country music hall of fame honouree Paul Brandt.

Not In My City works to cultivate awareness and action to fight sexual exploitation and sex trafficking in Calgary and across Canada. The statistics around sex trafficking alone in Canada are staggering. Indigenous peoples make up only 4% of the Canadian population, and yet represent 50% of Canada's human trafficking victims. Seventy-five percent of people in prostitution began during their childhood, and 93% of Canada's human trafficking victims come from within Canada.

Next week, Not In My City will bring together businesses, organizations, and first nations groups, along with police, health, children's services, and not-for-profit agencies in and around Calgary to build an action plan to prevent sexual exploitation and sex trafficking.

I want to congratulate Paul Brandt and the Not In My City team for their relentless work on this important issue, and invite all members to join the fight against sexual exploitation and to declare "not in my city".

CANADA SUMMER JOBS PROGRAM

Mr. Robert Oliphant (Don Valley West, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, with rumours of adjournment, this may be my last opportunity to thank this year's pages for their tremendous support, good humour, and patience.

Some of them may get work this summer through the Canada summer jobs program. Sixty-three employers in Don Valley West will receive over $800,000 through CSJ, creating quality summer jobs for students who will gain valuable experience working for organizations like the Canadian Film Centre, the Toronto Inner-City Rugby Foundation, TAC Sports, Plan International, Habitat for Humanity, the CNIB, and Holland Bloorview Kids Rehabilitation Hospital.

They will also work for a number of religious organizations that are close to my heart: the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Toronto, the Islamic Society of Toronto, the Salvation Army, St. Clement of Ohrid Macedonian Orthodox Cathedral, and Trinity Presbyterian Church York Mills.

CSJ students gain the experience and job skills needed for their future, and employers and communities gain the young talent they need to continue to succeed and thrive. May they all have a happy summer.

* * *

● (1410)

BRAIN INJURY AWARENESS MONTH

Mrs. Bernadette Jordan (South Shore—St. Margarets, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, June is Brain Injury Awareness Month, which is something my family will be talking about as much as possible, because we know how quickly one's life can change.

My sister-in-law Karen fell down the stairs last August and suffered a massive brain injury. After two surgeries and three weeks on life support, my brother had to make the difficult decision to remove Karen from the machines that were keeping her alive. Her brain had limited function, and we were told she would have no quality of life if she lived.

However, this is a happy story, because Karen not only survived but recovered 100%, which was something nobody thought possible. The brain is an amazing thing, and more research needs to be done to know how brain injuries can be overcome.

On behalf of my brother and our whole family, I would like to thank all the wonderful caregivers, doctors, nurses, and specialists who saw our family through this very difficult time. I encourage all members of this House to support brain research.

I would also like to take this time to wish a very happy birthday to my sister-in-law, Karen McGinnis O'Hagan.

PRIDE MONTH

Mrs. Karen Vecchio (Elgin—Middlesex—London, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to stand today to recognize the month of June as Pride Month. It is a time when the LGBTQ community, their families, and their allies come together to celebrate who they are and who they love. Whether through parades and festivals, rallies, or countless other events, Pride Month is an important time for the LGBTQ movement both at home and around the world.

In many countries, identifying as LGBTQ is illegal, and too many members of the community are persecuted and even jailed, simply for loving who they love. Luckily, in Canada, Pride Month does not end in June. Festivals in cities and communities in our country continue throughout the summer. Personally, I am looking forward to celebrating London's Pride Festival from July 19 to July 29, and I invite members to come and celebrate with our community.

To all those celebrating this month and throughout the summer, happy Pride Month. They should never stop being proud of who they are.

* * *

GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

Mrs. Eva Nassif (Vimy, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, #MeToo and Time's Up have shone a light on the consequences of sexism, misogyny, and gender-based violence, renewing calls for gender equality.

A year ago today, our government announced "It's Time: Canada's Strategy to Prevent and Address Gender-Based Violence". This first federal strategy on gender-based violence, with an investment of nearly $200 million, is based on prevention, support for survivors and their families, and the promotion of responsive justice and legal systems.

[*Translation*]

Over the past year, our government has taken action. By taking steps such as providing about 7,000 new or refurbished beds for women fleeing violence, undertaking a review of sexual assault cases that had been deemed unfounded, and investing $20 million in projects to support survivors of violence and their families, our government has demonstrated its commitment to ending gender-based violence and helping survivors rebuild their lives.

* * *

[*English*]

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Ms. Cheryl Hardcastle (Windsor—Tecumseh, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I rise on behalf of at least 50,000 workers employed directly by the steel and aluminum industries and the communities that rely directly and indirectly on their income.

It is incumbent on the government to work with the U.S. to get a permanent exemption to these tariffs. Canadians know they have been imposed on us as an unfair bullying tactic to influence the renegotiation of NAFTA. We know Donald Trump has used national security as an excuse for these tariffs. Now he is threatening our auto workers with his tariffs. These jobs are vital to people in my community and the communities of many members. A recent TD Economics report tells of 160,000 job losses, mostly in Ontario.

The Liberal government must stand up for Canadian workers and act on national strategies the NDP has been requesting for years. The strength of our country depends on the strength of our communities. Our workers are that strength, and we need to be their backbone now more than ever.

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[*Translation*]

MP FOR CHICOUTIMI—LE FJORD

Mr. Alain Rayes (Richmond—Arthabaska, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I want to take a moment to congratulate the new member for Chicoutimi—Le Fjord, Richard Martel.

After six months with no one to represent them, the people of this magnificent region will finally have a voice in Ottawa. They chose an authentic, passionate, and hard-working man I have gotten to know over the past few months. I could not be prouder to be welcoming this new member of Parliament to our big, beautiful caucus.

The people of Chicoutimi—Le Fjord sent a strong message to the Liberal government and the rest of Canada. The Conservative Party is the only serious alternative to the current government, and it is the only political party that can defend Quebec's interests in Ottawa within a strong, united Canada.

I want to congratulate Richard on his resounding victory last night. I also want to thank all the members of our wonderful Conservative family and all the volunteers for their tireless efforts throughout this campaign. I want to thank everyone who is making sure the riding of Chicoutimi—Le Fjord will have a worthy representative here in the Parliament of Canada.

* * *

● (1415)

[*English*]

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Mr. Omar Alghabra (Mississauga Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Tarek Loubani was recently in the news when he was shot by the Israeli military in Gaza. Our government has called for an independent investigation into what happened and into reports of the use of excessive force that led to the death and injury of thousands, including children and paramedics.

I am not exaggerating when I say I received over 20,000 emails from Canadians who are upset by what happened.

I want to thank our consular officials for assisting him during his ordeal. I am pleased to say that Dr. Loubani is recovering well and is here with us in Ottawa today.

Dr. Loubani is an emergency physician and an associate professor at Western University. Tarek is also an innovator. He designed low-cost, 3D-printed medical devices that can save lives in areas where medical supplies are scarce.

Dr. Loubani should be recognized for dedicating his life to helping others. His is an important voice in today's world. I am grateful for his humanitarian service and his commitment to peace.

ORAL QUESTIONS

[*Translation*]

MARIJUANA

Hon. Andrew Scheer (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I want to begin by congratulating all the candidates who ran in yesterday's byelection, and particularly the new member for Chicoutimi—Le Fjord, Richard Martel.

The Conservatives will always respect provincial jurisdictions. At present, Quebec and some of the other provinces want to prohibit their citizens from growing marijuana at home.

Why is the Prime Minister ignoring Quebec's wishes?

Hon. Ginette Petitpas Taylor (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, protecting the health and safety of Canadians is our number one priority. We believe that home cultivation will help displace the illegal market. We are convinced that Canadians will safeguard their cannabis plants and products in the same way they keep their prescription drugs and alcohol safe and secure in the home.

We are also following the advice of the task force and the approach implemented by other jurisdictions that have legalized cannabis.

* * *

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Hon. Andrew Scheer (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, aluminum workers are worried about their jobs. We have heard a lot of talk about this issue in Saguenay over the past few weeks.

For weeks, Canadian aluminum has been subject to unfair tariffs, while American aluminum has been exempt.

Why has the Prime Minister not already imposed Canadian tariffs?

● (1420)

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the American tariffs on steel and aluminum are illegal and unfair. The national security pretext is absurd and insulting to Canadians.

On July 1, we will impose retaliatory measures equivalent to the unfair tariffs imposed on us by the United States. It is very important that we take the time to consult with our industry, our workers, and our consumers.

[*English*]

Hon. Andrew Scheer (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, when it comes to protecting the Canadian economy, the Prime Minister inherited a strong fiscal position, but he weakened Canada's position by squandering that and racking up massive deficits. Now, with the threat of new U.S. tariffs, TD Bank is warning that up to 160,000 jobs in the Canadian auto sector could be at risk. Obviously, workers and their families are worried.

However, it was no surprise that under the Liberal administration we would face these types of trade disruptions. Why did the finance minister table a budget without any mention of a contingency plan for Canada's economy?

Hon. Bill Morneau (Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to bring us back to remember what we were actually left with, which was $150 billion in additional debt from the last government. We were also left with a high unemployment rate, which was 7.1%. We were also left with a low growth rate.

We have turned all of that around, with the lowest unemployment rate we have seen in 40 years and the highest growth rate we have seen in a decade.

Importantly, what the member does not quite understand is that yes, in fact, we do create a contingency in every budget. We did that this year, as we have done in past years. We are doing what we need to do to help Canadian families.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: Order. The members who feel they have to yell out when someone else has the floor ought to be embarrassed at their inability to control themselves.

The hon. member for Richmond—Arthabaska.

* * *

[*Translation*]

MARIJUANA

Mr. Alain Rayes (Richmond—Arthabaska, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to draw attention to the resounding victory of our new colleague, Richard Martel, who will soon be joining us in the House.

One of the issues that people in the riding of Chicoutimi—Le Fjord were talking a lot about during the byelection is the legalization of marijuana by the government and the Prime Minister.

Because of the stubbornness of the Liberal government and its Prime Minister, who do not respect provincial jurisdictions, we are headed straight for a legal battle.

Here is what everyone wants to know about the legalization of marijuana, which Canadians will have to pay for. Why does the Prime Minister not want to respect provincial jurisdictions—

The Speaker: Order. The hon. Minister of Health.

Hon. Ginette Petitpas Taylor (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, protecting the health and safety of Canadians is an absolute priority for our government.

Our goal is to protect our youth and take the profit out of the hands of organized crime. Home cultivation will help displace the black market. We are also following the advice of the task force and the work done by other states that have legalized cannabis and allow home cultivation.

Mr. Alain Rayes (Richmond—Arthabaska, CPC): Mr. Speaker, first there was Trans Mountain, involving British Columbia and Alberta; then the carbon tax, an issue for Ontario and Saskatchewan; and now we are adding to the list the home cultivation of cannabis, involving Quebec and Manitoba. This means that, at present, more than 50% of Canada's provinces, accounting for 79% of the population, are involved in legal proceedings that will cost Canadians millions of dollars in legal fees.

Why is the Prime Minister stubbornly refusing to respect provincial jurisdictions?

Hon. Ginette Petitpas Taylor (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, protecting the health of Canadians is an absolute priority for our government. The Harper Conservatives' approach did not work. It allowed criminals to profit and did not manage to keep cannabis out of the hands of youth. We thank the Senate for its work, and we agree with the majority of the amendments presented by Conservative and independent senators. We are convinced that Bill C-45 will allow us to reach our objectives and ensure a responsible transition to a legal cannabis market.

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IMMIGRATION, REFUGEES AND CITIZENSHIP

Mr. Guy Caron (Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques, NDP): Mr. Speaker, for six weeks now, the Trump administration has been separating and locking up migrants' children in metal cages at the Mexican border. There are 2,000 frightened children, screaming, crying, and sleeping on the ground. There are thousands of stricken parents who had their own flesh and blood ripped away from them, when they were only trying to find a better future. The Canadian government must denounce this inhumane situation.

Hwo can this government consider the United States to be a safe third country when the U.S. government is locking up children and separating migrant families?

●(1425)

Hon. Marc Garneau (Minister of Transport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I think that all Canadians are troubled by the images they have been seeing from the United States. All children's lives are precious, and we must do everything we can to avoid separating children form their parents. When a family of asylum seekers comes to our country, we do everything we can to avoid separating them, and in the rare cases in which detention is necessary, we try to minimize the length of this detention.

Mr. Guy Caron (Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques, NDP): Mr. Speaker, if that is the case, what will it take for the government to denounce the situation? Thousands of migrants and their children are being treated inhumanely. America is showing more and more of its ugly side, and more and more people, even Americans, are speaking out against the Trump administration's barbaric practice. More and more people in the international community are also denouncing the cruelty of using children as a deterrent. If the Conservatives agree, they must rise and say so. The government must do what is necessary and officially suspend the safe third country agreement.

Why is it not doing so?

[*English*]

Hon. Ahmed Hussen (Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I think all Canadians are troubled by the images coming out of the United States. The lives of children are very precious, and their security and well-being have to be foremost in our minds.

We are required under the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act to monitor the United States domestic asylum policy to make sure that any changes in its asylum system continue to meet its designation as a safe third country. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in Canada does the same analysis. We continue to monitor those developments.

Ms. Jenny Kwan (Vancouver East, NDP): Mr. Speaker, even former Conservative minister Chris Alexander is calling for the suspension of the safe third country agreement.

Trump is taking migrant children hostage and putting them in cages to advance his political agenda. The UN Commission on Human Rights calls this "unconscionable". The UNHCR acknowledges that Trump's tactics are inhumane. Amnesty International calls it "nothing short of torture".

Will the Prime Minister state the obvious, that the United States is no longer a safe country for migrant children?

Hon. Ahmed Hussen (Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I think all Canadians are troubled by the images that are emerging from the United States. The lives of these children are very precious, and we continue to monitor any changes to the domestic asylum system in the United States as we are required to by the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act. The UNHCR in Canada does the same work.

The safe third country agreement, the hon. member should know, is not about denial of asylum. It is about the orderly management of asylum seekers between the United States and Canada, and has actually been a very good agreement for Canada moving forward.

Ms. Jenny Kwan (Vancouver East, NDP): Mr. Speaker, Canadians are calling for action. It is about lives, real lives, real people, real children being subjected to torture. Former minister Lloyd Axworthy, the chair of the World Refugee Council, and Allan Rock, former UN ambassador, are clearly stating that the U.S. is no longer a safe country for asylum seekers. Canada must not be complicit in this inhumane treatment of children.

Will the Prime Minister find the courage and suspend the safe third country agreement?

Hon. Ahmed Hussen (Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, here is some action that our government has taken: We have provided global leadership under the UN global compact on migration working with respected former Supreme Court justice Louise Arbour. We have invested over $138 million on a national immigration—

Ms. Jenny Kwan: Tell that to the children who are being tortured.

The Speaker: I would ask the hon. member for Vancouver East to come to order and not to be yelling when someone else has the floor, as she is doing.

The hon. Minister of Immigration has the floor.

Hon. Ahmed Hussen: Mr. Speaker, we have reduced immigration detention by 30%.

All the stakeholders in this field have applauded our efforts to make sure that we have minimized the use of immigration detention. Groups such as the Canadian Council for Refugees have said, "These new instructions are a concrete step towards ending the detention of children on immigration grounds—"

● (1430)

The Speaker: The hon. member for Milton.

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CARBON PRICING

Hon. Lisa Raitt (Milton, CPC): Mr. Speaker, another day, and another day of the government's carbon tax cover-up. It has come to the point where even experts at the University of Calgary are giving testimony to the Senate committee on energy that actually tells us what we could be looking at in terms of cost to families. That number is $1,100.

The minister has a choice here. Either she can accept that number that has been presented to the Senate committee or she can tell us what her department says the number is. Which will it be?

Mr. Jonathan Wilkinson (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on this side of the House, we know that climate change is real. Canadians expect us to protect the environment and to grow the economy. That is why we are getting rid of coal-fired power and the pollution that it causes. We are investing billions of dollars in clean transportation in communities and conservation. We are making sure that polluters will pay so that we all can have a healthy environment as we go forward.

The Conservatives have no plan to tackle climate change and no plan to grow the economy. It is clearly not a priority for them. Unlike the Conservatives, we know that the economy and the environment go together.

Hon. Lisa Raitt (Milton, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the priority on this side is people like senior citizens in Nova Scotia, who are going to be suffering because they are going to have to come up with $1,100 every year. Here is a Statistics Canada number, too, that is real: 94% of Nova Scotia seniors are low-income seniors. Where are they going to find $1,100 in tax money to give this failed Liberal government?

When are Liberals going to give it up, do what's right, and get rid of the carbon tax?

Mr. Jonathan Wilkinson (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, when it comes to the environment and the economy, we have a clear choice. We can put the health of the environment and our communities at risk, as the Conservatives would do, or we can take real action to address climate change and to grow a clean growth economy. In opposition to the practical and cost-effective measures that we are taking to fight climate change and grow the economy, either the Conservatives do not know what real action on climate change is or they simply do not care.

In the modern world, the economy and the environment go together. We have a climate plan that will allow us to address greenhouse gas emissions and grow our economy going forward, and that is exactly what we are going to do.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the people of Chicoutimi—Le Fjord sent two messages yesterday. One, they see the Conservative Party as a viable alternative to the Liberals. Two, they are getting fed up with the Liberals' approach, which is costing businesses and individuals more money. Among the new charges is the Liberal carbon tax, which all Canadians will have to pay. The people of Chicoutimi have had it up to here with these extra taxes.

Why is the government bent on doing this? Why is it still withholding information about the Liberal carbon tax?

Mr. Jonathan Wilkinson (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, climate change is real, and Canadians expect us to protect the environment while growing the economy. That is why we are eliminating carbon pollution and investing millions of dollars in clean transportation, communities, and conservation efforts.

The Conservatives have no plan to tackle climate change or grow the economy. Those are obviously not its priorities. In contrast, we have made priorities of tackling climate change and growing the economy.

Mr. Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to publicly repeat what I told my colleague in private earlier. Bravo and congratulations on his efforts to speak French. We all appreciate it. However, just because he is speaking French does not mean that I entirely agree with what he is saying, so I want to set the record straight.

Under the Conservative government, greenhouse gas emissions were cut by 2.2% and the economy was booming, with a 16.9% increase in GDP. That is exactly the kind of solution that all Canadians want, and we did that without the Liberal carbon tax.

Why are the Liberals continuing down this path?

Mr. Jonathan Wilkinson (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canadians are seeing the effects of climate change and everyone, including companies and families, are doing something about it. They know that it is the right choice for our economy, our children, and our grandchildren. Our plan is working.

We also have the strongest economic growth in the G7. We will continue to work with Canadians to find intelligent solutions to fight climate change and create good jobs for the middle class.

● (1435)

[*English*]

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Carleton, CPC): Mr. Speaker, here is what the finance department says about the cost of the carbon tax: "These higher costs would then cascade through the economy in the form of higher prices, thus leading all firms and consumers to pay more for goods and services." Key findings are blacked out. We do not know how much more.

The deputy leader of the Conservative Party quoted one report saying that it would cost $1,100 a family. The Canadian Taxpayers Federation says it would cost $2,600 a family. Which of those two numbers is correct?

Mr. Jonathan Wilkinson (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, when it comes to the environment and the economy, we have a clear choice. We can put the health of our environment at risk or we can take strong action to address greenhouse gas emissions and to grow our economy.

We have developed in conjunction and partnership with the provinces and territories a plan to address greenhouse gas emissions and to grow the economy going forward. That is an important measure for our children, for our grandchildren, and for the health of our economy going forward. That is exactly what we are going to do.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Carleton, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we have quoted two very credible sources on the costing of the Liberal carbon tax for the average Canadian family and both times the parliamentary secretary has refused to answer the question.

The deputy leader of the Conservative Party quoted a cost of $1,100 per family. Are we getting closer to the real cost? What about the number quoted by the Canadian Taxpayers Federation: $2,600 for a family? Am I getting warmer now? Is it more than $2,600? Why do the Liberals not just end this cover-up now and tell us what this tax will cost the average family?

Mr. Jonathan Wilkinson (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is very clear to the House that the Conservative Party is no different from the Conservative Party of Stephen Harper, a party that actually did not believe in climate change, did nothing to address climate change, and did nothing to advance the clean growth economy going forward.

This government believes in protecting the environment for future generations to come, but doing so in a positive way that will grow our economy for the future, and that is exactly what we are going to do.

* * *

[*Translation*]

IMMIGRATION, REFUGEES, AND CITIZENSHIP

Ms. Hélène Laverdière (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, NDP): Mr. Speaker, no parent wants to see their children ripped from their arms, but that is what is happening at the Mexican border where the Trump administration is essentially holding children hostage for political gain.

The Prime Minister says that he recognizes the importance of being firm and unequivocal when it comes to protecting human rights, but championing human rights ought to show through words and deeds.

Will the government denounce the situation and suspend the safe third country agreement?

Hon. Marc Garneau (Minister of Transport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as I said, I think that all Canadians are troubled by the images coming out of the United States. The lives of these children are precious. We must think of their safety and well-being first.

We have spared no effort to improve Canada's immigration detention system and to limit the use of detention as much as possible. What is happening in the United States is simply unacceptable.

[*English*]

Ms. Rachel Blaney (North Island—Powell River, NDP): Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Prime Minister said in this House that he will not play politics when it comes to the safe third country agreement. This is not a game. Children are being torn from their parents and being held hostage in cages. This Prime Minister and the government have the power to do something about it.

We are not playing. Lives are being destroyed. Canada is being called to action. Will the Prime Minister stand up for human rights, help these children, and finally suspend the safe third country agreement?

Hon. Ahmed Hussen (Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we have taken a leadership role in making sure that the international community treats child migrants in a dignified manner.

I think all Canadians are troubled by the images emerging from the United States. We have made our point clear with respect to making sure that we acknowledge the lives of these precious children are important, and their security and well-being should be our utmost priority.

We have taken action, both domestically and internationally. We have invested $138 million to make sure that we develop alternatives to immigration detention, to make sure that, moving forward—

The Speaker: Order. The hon. member for Calgary Nose Hill.

* * *

● (1440)

PUBLIC SAFETY

Hon. Michelle Rempel (Calgary Nose Hill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, in October 2016, when the Prime Minister voted to support my motion regarding the Yazidis, he agreed to the term of the motion which required that article V of the genocide convention would be enacted by Canada. Article V explicitly requires us to bring perpetrators of genocide to swift justice, including those who are complicit in it.

It has been almost two years since this vote. Why is the Prime Minister allowing Canadian ISIS genocide perpetrators to walk free?

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my heart and that of all Canadians goes out to Nadia Murad, whose courage is an inspiration to our government and to the world.

We have been clear, all members in this House, that the persecution of the Yazidis in Iraq and Syria is genocide. We are committed to working with Nadia and other Yazidi women to ensure that their case is heard at international courts.

Our government is standing up for the rights of survivors. We are calling on the Security Council to recognize sexual violence as a criteria for UN sanctions.

Hon. Michelle Rempel (Calgary Nose Hill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, yet by allowing Canadian ISIS perpetrators of genocide to walk free, without so much as a peace bond, the Prime Minister has broken the covenant he made with Yazidis like Nadia, when he voted for that motion. Knowing what he knows, that there are Canadians who raped and murdered for ISIS, and letting them walk free, he is complicit in denying them justice.

Why is the Prime Minister more focused on giving these confessed terrorists poetry lessons instead of bringing justice to the victims of ISIS?

Hon. Ralph Goodale (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our priority in dealing with these situations is to prosecute, to the full extent of the law, as soon as the evidence is available.

I would point out that the public record shows that under the previous government terror charges were laid against four individuals in absentia, after they had left Canada, but no charges were laid against any of the 60-some terrorist travellers who returned to Canada, under the previous government.

Since 2016, four charges have been laid against the returnees, two have been convicted, and two others are in the process of prosecution.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this is unbelievable. Abu Huzaifa, a self-proclaimed violent jihadist, is living freely in Toronto. According to his reintegration program counsellor, his client has become even more radicalized in his jihadist ideology. Even the Minister of Public Safety has said that it is nearly impossible to change the behaviour of fundamentalists.

Why, then, does the Prime Minister continue to fund reintegration programs for terrorists when it is clear that such programs do not work?

[*English*]

Hon. Ralph Goodale (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we use a full suite of measures to deal with these situations: surveillance, investigations, interviews, criminal charges, prosecutions wherever the evidence prevails, peace bonds, Criminal Code listings, no-fly listings, and hoisting of passports. There are threat reduction measures, as appropriate, under the CSIS Act.

The determination of which of the tools are appropriate is left to the professionals in our police and security agencies. They are best positioned to make the judgment calls.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC): Mr. Speaker, in the case of Abu Huzaifa, a name we are all familiar with, we can see that he is still engaged in jihad with his buddies on the web. He justifies terrorism against the west. I think that is pretty clear evidence. On top of that, there are videos, photos, and oral testimony from witnesses proving that he is guilty. I understand that it is hard for the Prime Minister to admit that he was wrong to believe that this murderer could be reintegrated.

My question is this: what more does he need to be convinced that this terrorist should be brought to justice and put in prison?

[*English*]

Hon. Ralph Goodale (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the comments made by the hon. member seem to be drawn from various media reports. It is always open to members of Parliament to read the press and to draw their own conclusions from what is reported in the media. In order to deal with a case in court, there has to be an investigation by the police force, the collection of evidence, the laying of charges, and prosecution through the criminal justice system.

That is what we are trying to do, while those members read the press.

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NATURAL RESOURCES

Mr. Kennedy Stewart (Burnaby South, NDP): Mr. Speaker, while the Trans Mountain expansion project might only look like a line on a map to the natural resources minister, the impacts on those living in Metro Vancouver are real and potentially devastating to our community. That is why there is so much resistance to this project and why people are getting arrested to stop it.

The minister acknowledged his threats to use the army against protesters were reckless, so will he condemn former Bank of Canada governor David Dodge's comments that we need to somehow "understand" people will die protesting this pipeline?

● (1445)

Hon. Ralph Goodale (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canadians have their full democratic right to express their point of view through protest and dissent. That is enshrined in Canadian law and it is protected by the Canadian Constitution. They must however express their points of view fully within the context of law and taking into account the public safety of others.

The laws to protect public safety will be duly enforced, as they should be.

Mr. Nathan Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP): Mr. Speaker, after losing what was the worst and most expensive game of Texas Hold'em in history, we now learn that the company the Liberals bought their pipeline from may have falsified evidence to the NEB.

For Coldwater first nations, 90% of their drinking water is threatened by this pipeline. Do members know what their backup plan is? They have a fire truck. Chief Lee Spahan said that this Prime Minister "is saying he wants to implement" the UN declaration, "he wants to stop boiling water advisories" for first nations, yet he won't look at the impact of a pipeline that "goes right through our aquifer."

Will the Prime Minister have the courage to actually visit Coldwater to see the impacts of his mad scheme to build a pipeline where it is not wanted and not needed?

Hon. Jim Carr (Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Trans Mountain expansion project was subject to the most exhaustive review in the history of pipelines in Canada. A key pillar of that review was our engagement and consultation with local communities.

Our government is committed to the ongoing work of reconciliation with indigenous peoples and it is why we undertake important work like the co-development indigenous advisory and monitoring committee. Communities alongside the National Energy Board will monitor the project throughout its life cycle.

Questions regarding submissions and filing for the National Energy Board should be directed directly to the NEB.

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[*Translation*]

THE ECONOMY

Mr. Kyle Peterson (Newmarket—Aurora, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we know that small and medium-sized businesses are significant contributors to our national economy and help create good, well-paying jobs across the country.

[*English*]

Could the Minister of Finance explain to the House how today's launch of the Canadian business growth fund will help these businesses grow, compete, and create more jobs for Canadians?

[*Translation*]

Hon. Bill Morneau (Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague, the member for Newmarket—Aurora, for his question and the important work he does.

[*English*]

Today, the leading Canadian banks and other financial institutions announced that they are going to join together to create a fund of up to $1 billion over 10 years to support small and medium-sized businesses in our country to help them grow. More than just funding, this is going to help with guidance and mentorship in networks so that small businesses can be successful, creating jobs and growing our economy.

I want to take the opportunity to thank these leading institutions for working together to help our economy to grow, helping our country—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Oshawa.

* * *

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Mr. Colin Carrie (Oshawa, CPC): Mr. Speaker, workers and families in Oshawa are concerned about the trade war between Canada and the U.S. Automakers use specialized steel imported from the U.S. in order to build their cars. A 25% tariff on autos has been threatened, which would seriously harm the Canadian auto industry. Today, TD Bank warned that these tariffs could cost 160,000 auto jobs. If 160,000 job losses is not an emergency for the Liberal government, then I do not know what is.

What is the Prime Minister doing to ensure that Canadian auto workers do not lose their jobs?

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the member for the opportunity to be very clear with Canadian auto workers that our government and I believe the Canadian Parliament stand firmly with them. With regards to a section 232 investigation, the idea that Canada and Canadian cars could pose any kind of security threat to the United States is frankly absurd.

This is an issue the Prime Minister has raised with the President. I have raised it with Ambassador Lighthizer, with Secretary Ross, and with Secretary Pompeo. We are working closely with our allies in Europe, Asia, and Mexico on this issue.

Hon. Erin O'Toole (Durham, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the minister's kind words, about all parliamentarians standing with my friend's concerns about auto tariffs, are not matched by actions because the Liberal members of the trade committee just refused to meet after the imposition, or potential imposition, of U.S. auto tariffs. We are almost a year away from the anniversary of the minister's priority speech on NAFTA, where she did not mention the auto industry, and now we know there are 160,000 jobs at risk.

Will the minister at least confirm to this House that all reciprocal tariff monies that Canada receives go immediately and directly to the steel, aluminum, and auto industries?

● (1450)

Mr. Marco Mendicino (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to build on the answer of my hon. colleague, the Minister of Foreign Affairs. Canada's automotive sector is strong, and uniquely positioned to design and build the cars of today and tomorrow, and our highly skilled workforce is the driving force behind it.

Our government is investing $110 million to Toyota in Cambridge to maintain 8,000 jobs; $49 million to Linamar in Guelph, creating 1,500 new jobs; $41.8 million to the Honda plant in Alliston, supporting 4,000 jobs; and $102.4 million to the Ford plant in Windsor. We will stand with auto workers, day by day, every step of the way.

* * *

FISHERIES AND OCEANS

Mr. Todd Doherty (Cariboo—Prince George, CPC): Mr. Speaker, through his actions and his words, the Minister of Fisheries has shaken the entire fishing industry in Atlantic Canada. He has eroded the relationship and trust between fishermen and DFO. Now the minister is putting even more lobster fishermen out of work by announcing yet another closure. Laurence Cook of the Grand Manan Fishermen's Association said yesterday that roughly a third of Grand Manan's fleet will be impacted.

That is a lot of jobs. Why is the minister refusing to listen to reason?

Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, obviously, we are concerned about the ability of the lobster fishery, the snow crab fishery, and other important fisheries, for the economy of Atlantic Canada to continue to prosper. That is exactly why we have taken very serious and very stringent science-based measures to protect the highly endangered North Atlantic right whale. Failure to do so, as my hon. friend knows very well, puts in jeopardy our access to international markets. That would be the single most devastating thing that could hurt the fishermen that my hon. friend pretends he cares about.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: Order. I would ask the hon. Minister of Fisheries to be cautious in his statements. I think we all care about all Canadians.

The hon. member for Cariboo—Prince George.

Mr. Todd Doherty (Cariboo—Prince George, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I care about them. I am the only one who is talking to the fishermen in Atlantic Canada.

This minister has shaken the confidence of an entire industry. There are groups calling for his resignation. He has met with fishermen only in response to the protest, not through consultation. The pending closure is going to devastate a local economy. Workers, onshore and off, are going to be affected. It is the most prosperous time of year, and lobster is the engine that drives communities like Grand Manan. This will be a massive hit to the local economy. It is not too late. Will the minister meet with these people, find a compromise, and get people back to work?

Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my hon. friend refers to devastating economic consequences. It is important to understand that the area we closed was for six days of a 30-week season. As you would know well, Mr. Speaker, as you have been minister of fisheries and oceans yourself, that season opened in November. Therefore, the last six days of the season will be closed because that is a very important area for the foraging of North Atlantic right whales. We think it is important to protect these iconic species and to protect the Canadian economy at the same time.

* * *

[*Translation*]

THE ENVIRONMENT

Ms. Anne Minh-Thu Quach (Salaberry—Suroît, NDP): Mr. Speaker, according to Équiterre, the continued rise in oil spills suggests that the government is taking a lax attitude to regulating pipelines. The government does not even have accurate, reliable statistics due to inconsistencies in the oil spill data compiled by the National Energy Board and the Transportation Safety Board of Canada.

If incidents are not being reported, how can the government effectively monitor pipelines? Are the Liberals planning to eliminate these inconsistencies to better protect our environment?

Hon. Marc Garneau (Minister of Transport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we have been very clear on the issue of oil spills.

Naturally, our government has a duty to do everything it can to get our products to international markets. This is good for the economy. At the same time, we are very clear on the issue of oil spills, and we have implemented the polluter pays principle. We are adamant on that point. All pipeline companies are responsible for cleaning up any damage caused by spills.

● (1455)

Mr. Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP): Mr. Speaker, while the Liberals are wasting our money on a leaky old pipeline, it has emerged that the pipeline safety and monitoring system is not working anymore.

Last year was the worst year in a decade for spills and leaks. Of all the incidents that occurred in 2017, 23% were in British Columbia and 55% were in Quebec.

The system is so broken that it can take eight years for an incident to be reported. I repeat, eight years. How many inspectors have been sent out and how many fines have been issued since 2012? Zero.

When will the Liberals take this seriously and fix this broken system?

[*English*]

Hon. Jim Carr (Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member will know that the Pipeline Safety Act offers terrific protection against these spills. He will also know that we have co-developed with indigenous communities both along the Enbridge Line 3 and the TMX monitoring committees so indigenous peoples themselves will be very much involved in monitoring the safety of these lines not only through the construction period, but throughout the entire life cycle. We are better positioned now than we have ever been.

[*Translation*]

MARIJUANA

Mrs. Sylvie Boucher (Beauport—Côte-de-Beaupré—Île d'Orléans—Charlevoix, CPC): Mr. Speaker, no one can claim that the Liberals are champions of provincial jurisdictions. One of their favourite slogans is "Ottawa knows best".

The Liberals do not listen to the provinces or the Senate. Quebec and Manitoba are refusing to allow home growing of cannabis. They want the federal government to respect their jurisdiction over the regulatory framework for home growing.

Will the government respect provincial jurisdictions, yes or no?

Hon. Ginette Petitpas Taylor (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the health and safety of all Canadians is a top priority for our government.

The approach taken by Mr. Harper's Conservatives did not work. It allowed criminals to profit from cannabis and did not manage to keep cannabis out of the hands of children.

We thank the Senate for its work and we agree on the vast majority of the proposed amendments. We believe that Bill C-45 will help us meet our objectives and allow for a responsible transition towards a legal market.

Mr. Joël Godin (Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I will try a second time.

This Liberal government has established that its only priority is legalizing marijuana. There are many other files that matter to Canadians. Are the friends of the Liberal Party applying pressure? Why not take the time to do things right?

There is nothing in this law to protect our young people and get rid of organized crime. Furthermore, it tramples on provincial jurisdictions.

Will this centralist government respect provinces such as Manitoba and Quebec and allow them to prohibit the home cultivation of pot plants?

Hon. Ginette Petitpas Taylor (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, once again, protecting the health and safety of Canadians is an absolute priority for our government.

Our objective is to protect our children and ensure that organized crime does not profit from cannabis. Home cultivation will help displace the black market. We are convinced that Canadians will safeguard their cannabis plants and products in the same way they keep their prescription drugs and alcohol safe and secure at home.

We are also following the recommendations of the task force and all the work that has been done in other jurisdictions to legalize cannabis.

Mr. Bernard Généreux (Montmagny—L'Islet—Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am going to give this a third try.

Quebec and Manitoba have made it clear that they do not want home cannabis cultivation. That is as clear as can be, but the Minister of Health had no intention of considering the Senate's thoughtful amendments. She made her decision without even taking the time to talk to the provinces about it.

The people of Chicoutimi sent a very clear message: they have had enough of the "Ottawa knows best" attitude.

Will the Prime Minister now respect the provinces?

Hon. Ginette Petitpas Taylor (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, once again, Canadians' health and safety is our government's top priority. We are working with the provinces and territories and our partners to ensure a responsible transition to a legal market.

The Harper Conservatives' approach to cannabis made criminals money and did not protect our children. The government is legalizing, strictly regulating, and restricting access to cannabis. We are working with our partners to ensure an appropriate transition.

* * *

[*English*]

TOURISM

Mr. Ken Hardie (Fleetwood—Port Kells, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, with summer right around the corner, I know families from coast to coast to coast are planning to load up the car and travel our beautiful country to visit family or maybe one of our national parks. This summer's tourism season will be even busier because of the Canada-China year of tourism, bringing more tourists from China to Canada than ever before.

In my riding of Fleetwood—Port Kells, I know operators are excited about the new markets from which tourists are visiting Canada.

Could the Minister of Small Business and Tourism give the House an update on the progress of the Canada-China year of tourism?

● (1500)

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister of Small Business and Tourism, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, tourism is an important economic driver. More than 200,000 mostly small businesses support our tourism industry, which employs one in 10 Canadians. This year, 2018, is the Canada-China year of tourism, and this week I will be leading a federal-provincial-territorial tourism trade mission to China, with members of the Canadian tourism industry, including indigenous operators, that will highlight the world-class experiences we offer right in Canada.

As part of Canada's new tourism vision, we are committed to doubling the number of Chinese visitors to Canada by 2021. I look forward to working with my colleague from Fleetwood—Port Kells to make this year the best year for tourism.

Oral Questions

PUBLIC SERVICES OF PROCUREMENT

Mr. James Bezan (Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister continues to fail armed forces on the fighter jet file. He has refused to hold a timely, open competition, and he fabricated an imaginary capability gap. It is clear the Prime Minister has no idea what he is doing, and now the Liberals are increasing the number of 30-year-old fighter jets they are buying from Australia from 18 to 25.

Will the Prime Minister stop wasting taxpayer money and cancel this asinine interim purchase?

Hon. Harjit S. Sajjan (Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our government is committed to providing the Royal Canadian Air Force with the critical equipment it needs to be fully operational now and into the future. We have started the competition to replace the current F-18s. Yes, we are purchasing 18 airplanes, as well as additional planes, to maintain these aircrafts.

Given the member's concern for the state of the Royal Canadian Air Force assets, I would like to ask why the member and his colleagues voted against important projects like the Canadian surface combatant and the fixed wing search and rescue.

* * *

INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS

Ms. Georgina Jolibois (Desnethé—Missinippi—Churchill River, NDP): Mr. Speaker, this Thursday is National Indigenous Peoples Day, part of a week of festivities during which people from across the country celebrate the cultures and legacies of first nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples in Canada. All week there will be ceremonies, concerts, meals, and dancing. Despite all of these events, many Canadians will not be able to join these celebrations.

The government talks about reconciliation, but fails to meet its obligations to indigenous communities. Why will the Liberals not support my bill to make National Indigenous Peoples Day a statutory holiday?

Hon. Jane Philpott (Minister of Indigenous Services, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank the member opposite for drawing attention to the fact that this Thursday is National Indigenous Peoples Day. I encourage people to go online at Canada.ca to see all of the activities taking place across the country, including many in the national capital region.

Our government has embarked on a renewed relationship with indigenous peoples, one based on a recognition and implementation of rights on the basis of respect and partnership. This will be a great day to celebrate that new relationship.

* * *

PUBLIC SAFETY

Mr. Gordie Hogg (South Surrey—White Rock, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the recent shooting deaths of two youths in Surrey, one in grade 10 and the other in grade 11, are the most recent in an intolerable number of shootings and deaths that have occurred in our community. Many residents have suffered intolerable losses and emotional pain, and many are frustrated, frightened, and angry.

Could the Minister of Public Safety please tell us what actions the government is taking to reduce gun violence and the impact of gangs on our youth?

Hon. Ralph Goodale (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canada is a safe country, but over the past five years, indeed gun gang violence has been increasing. We are committed to combatting these trends and making our communities safer through a package of common sense measures.

Bill C-71 is one of those. It will enact measures to better protect Canadian communities from gun violence. Today, we released a report on the recent summit on guns and gangs. This report will help determine how best to allocate some $327 million to tackle gun-related violence and gang activities in Canada.

* * *

INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS

Mrs. Cathy McLeod (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we note that the commissioners of the national inquiry for missing indigenous women and girls asked for a two-year extension, but the minister granted it six months. Why only six months? Because, to quote the minister, "it would be important for the government to have time to respond to the final report before we go into an election."

Could the minister guarantee that this timeline is not political opportunism and is really going to give the inquiry the time to do the work that needs to get done.

● (1505)

Hon. Carolyn Bennett (Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we were pleased to give the inquiry some more time to hear from families and to write its report. We believe we gave a very substantial response to the interim report that will be able to deal with commemoration and healing and the kinds of work on policing and sexism and racism that we need to get on with right now.

We have always said that we would not wait until the final report to get on with our actions, and we are doing just that. We look forward its final report next spring.

* * *

[*Translation*]

MARIJUANA

Mr. Rhéal Fortin (Rivière-du-Nord, QD): Mr. Speaker, the Liberals' record for this session shows only one priority: cannabis. When Quebec asks for more time to do things properly, Ottawa does not care. When the Quebec National Assembly states its opposition to the limit of four pot plants per family, the Prime Minister makes fun of Quebec's elected officials. When Quebec wants to go at its own pace, Ottawa tells us to take a hike.

Will the Prime Minister finally understand that cannabis is not a priority for anybody but him and his friends, the big Liberal cannabis producers?

Hon. Ginette Petitpas Taylor (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, once again, protecting the health and safety of Canadians is a top priority for our government. The existing approach to cannabis does not work. It allows criminals to profit from cannabis and it is also a failure because it does not protect our children.

We thank the Senate for all its work and we agreed to the vast majority of the proposed amendments. We firmly believe that Bill C-45 will help us reach our objectives and ensure a responsible transition towards a legal cannabis market.

Mr. Rhéal Fortin (Rivière-du-Nord, QD): Mr. Speaker, if cannabis was the main priority for the Prime Minister, here is a list of things that were definitely not priorities for the Liberals: cracking down against tax havens, managing the migrant crisis, tackling climate change, setting appropriate health transfers, securing contracts for the Davie shipyard, and allowing a single tax return.

When will the Prime Minister start paying attention to Quebeckers' real priorities?

Hon. Ginette Petitpas Taylor (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, once again, protecting Canadians' health and safety is a top priority for our government. We cooperate with all our partners to ensure a responsible transition to a legal market. The current approach to cannabis does not work. It allows criminals to profit and has failed to protect our children. Our government is legalizing and strictly regulating cannabis to protect our children. We are working with our partners to come up with an appropriate date.

Mr. Mario Beaulieu (La Pointe-de-l'Île, BQ): Mr. Speaker, it is pretty bad when the Senate cares more about Quebec than the 41 phantom Liberal MPs from Quebec. The Senate is more in tune with Quebec than the Liberal Party. I never thought I would ever say this, but the senators are brighter than the Prime Minister. The writing is on the wall. This could all end in a showdown before the courts, and Quebec's powers will once again be trampled on.

Will the minister and the government commit to not challenging in court Quebec's wishes with respect to cannabis?

Hon. Ginette Petitpas Taylor (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, once again, protecting the health and safety of Canadians is our number one priority. The current approach to cannabis is not working. It lets criminals profit and does not protect our young people.

We thank senators for all the work they have done over the past few months, and we have agreed to the vast majority of amendments brought forward. We are convinced that Bill C-45 will give us the opportunity to achieve our objectives and ensure a responsible transition towards a legal market.

* * *

[*English*]

POINTS OF ORDER

ORAL QUESTIONS

Mr. Guy Caron (Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques, NDP): Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, while I was asking questions and listening to the member for Vancouver East, the member for St. Albert—Edmonton seemed to have pretty strong views and he was heckling. Now, we never know really what is being said when one is being heckled, but I would like to extend a friendly invitation for him to go to the foyer where he can actually use a camera and a microphone to express his support for Trump's migrant policy.

● (1510)

The Speaker: I encourage members not to be heckling and to pay attention to members who have the floor, because it is awfully hard for them to even hear what is being said if a member is talking when another member is trying to speak. It does not make much sense and we need to have order.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*English*]

IMPACT ASSESSMENT ACT

The House resumed from June 18 consideration of the motion that Bill C-69, an act to enact the impact assessment act and the Canadian energy regulator act, to amend the Navigation Protection Act and to make consequential amendments to other acts, be read the third time and passed, and of the motion that this question be now put.

The Speaker: It being 3:10 p.m., pursuant to an order made on Tuesday, May 29, 2018, the House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the previous question at the third reading stage of Bill C-69.

Call in the members.

● (1515)

(The House divided on the motion, which was agreed to on the following division:)

(Division No. 870)

YEAS

Members

Aldag	Alghabra
Alleslev	Amos
Anandasangaree	Arseneault
Arya	Ayoub
Badawey	Bains
Baylis	Beech
Bennett	Bibeau
Bittle	Blair
Boissonnault	Bossio
Bratina	Breton
Brison	Caesar-Chavannes
Carr	Casey (Cumberland—Colchester)
Casey (Charlottetown)	Chagger
Champagne	Chen
Cuzner	Dabrusin
Damoff	DeCourcey
Dhaliwal	Dhillon
Di Iorio	Drouin
Dubourg	Duclos
Duguid	Dzerowicz
Easter	Ehsassi
El-Khoury	Ellis
Erskine-Smith	Eyking
Eyolfson	Fergus
Fillmore	Finnigan
Fisher	Fonseca
Fortier	Fragiskatos
Fraser (West Nova)	Fraser (Central Nova)
Freeland	Fuhr
Garneau	Gerretsen

Goldsmith-Jones
Gould
Grewal
Hébert
Hogg
Housefather
Hutchings
Jones
Jowhari
Khalid
Lambropoulos
Lamoureux
Lauzon (Argenteuil—La Petite-Nation)
Lebouthillier
Levitt
Lockhart
Longfield
MacKinnon (Gatineau)
Massé (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia)
May (Cambridge)
McCrimmon
McGuinty
McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)
Mendès
Mihychuk
Monsef
Morrissey
Nassif
Ng
Oliphant
O'Regan
Paradis
Peterson
Philpott
Poissant
Ratansi
Robillard
Rogers
Rota
Ruimy
Sahota
Sajan
Sangha
Scarpaleggia
Schulte
Sgro
Sheehan
Sidhu (Brampton South)
Simms
Sorbara
Tabbara
Tassi
Vandenbeld
Virani
Wilkinson
Wrzesnewskyj
Young — 171

Goodale
Graham
Hardie
Hehr
Holland
Hussen
Iacono
Jordan
Kang
Khera
Lametti
Lapointe
LeBlanc
Lefebvre
Lightbound
Long
MacAulay (Cardigan)
Maloney

McDonald
McKay
McLeod (Northwest Territories)
Mendicino
Miller (Ville-Marie—Le Sud-Ouest—Île-des-Sœurs)
Monsef
Morneau
Murray
Nault
O'Connell
Oliver
Ouellette
Peschisolido
Petitpas Taylor
Picard
Qualtrough
Rioux
Rodriguez
Romanado
Rudd
Rusnak
Saini
Samson
Sarai
Schiefke
Serré
Shanahan
Sidhu (Mission—Matsqui—Fraser Canyon)
Sikand
Sohi
Spengemann
Tan
Vandal
Vaughan
Whalen
Wilson-Raybould
Yip

NAYS

Members

Aboultaif
Albrecht
Anderson
Aubin
Barsalou-Duval
Benson
Bergen
Berthold
Blaikie
Blaney (Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis)
Boucher
Boulerice
Brassard
Calkins
Caron
Chong
Christopherson
Clement
Cullen
Dehell
Doherty

Albas
Allison
Arnold
Barlow
Beaulieu
Benzen
Bernier
Bezan
Blaney (North Island—Powell River)
Block
Boudrias
Boutin-Sweet
Brosseau
Cannings
Carrie
Choquette
Clarke
Cooper
Davies
Diotte
Donnelly

Dreeshen
Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona)
Duvall
Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)
Finley
Gallant
Généreux
Godin
Hardcastle
Hoback
Jeneroux
Jolibois
Kent
Kusie
Lake
Laverdière
Liepert
Lobb
MacGregor
Maguire
Marcil
Mathyssen
McCauley (Edmonton West)
Miller (Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound)
Nantel
Nicholson
O'Toole
Pauzé
Poilievre
Raitt
Rankin
Reid
Richards
Saroya
Shields
Sorenson
Ste-Marie
Stewart
Stubbs
Thériault
Trost
Van Kesteren
Vecchio
Wagantall
Waugh
Weir
Yurdiga

Dubé
Dusseault
Eglinski
Falk (Provencher)
Fortin
Garrison
Genuis
Gourde
Harder
Hughes
Johns
Kelly
Kitchen
Kwan
Lauzon (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)
Leitch
Lloyd
Lukiwski
MacKenzie
Malcolmson
Masse (Windsor West)
May (Saanich—Gulf Islands)
McLeod (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo)
Motz
Nater
Nuttall
Paul-Hus
Plamondon
Quach
Ramsey
Rayes
Rempel
Sansoucy
Schmale
Sopuck
Stanton
Stetski
Strahl
Sweet
Tilson
Trudel
Van Loan
Viersen
Warkentin
Webber
Wong
Zimmer — 136

PAIRED

Nil

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

[*Translation*]

Pursuant to Standing Order 69.1, the first question is on part 1 regarding the impact assessment act, part 2 regarding the Canadian energy regulator act, the title, the preamble, the schedule, and all clauses in part 4, except clauses 85, 186, 187, and 195.

Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt these elements of the bill?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

The Speaker: All those in favour will please say yea.

Some hon. members: Yea.

The Speaker: All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

The Speaker: In my opinion the yeas have it.

And five or more members having risen:

The Speaker: The recorded division on these elements of the bill stands deferred.

● (1520)

[*English*]

The next question is on part 3 regarding the Navigation Protection Act, and clauses 85, 186, 187, and 195 of part 4.

Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt these elements of the bill?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

The Speaker: All those in favour of these elements of the bill will please say yea.

Some hon. members: Yea.

The Speaker: All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

The Speaker: In my opinion the yeas have it.

And five or more members having risen:

The Speaker: The recorded division on these elements of the bill stands deferred.

Normally at this time the House would proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded divisions at third reading stage of the bill. However, pursuant to order made Tuesday, May 29, 2018, the divisions stand deferred until Wednesday, June 20, 2018, at the expiry of the time provided for oral questions.

* * *

[*Translation*]

NATIONAL SECURITY ACT, 2017

The House resumed from June 18 consideration of the motion that Bill C-59, An Act respecting national security matters, be read the third time and passed.

The Speaker: Pursuant to order made Tuesday, May 29, the House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division at third reading of Bill C-59.

Pursuant to Standing Order 69.1, the first question is on parts 1 to 5 of the bill, as well as the title, the preamble, part 9 regarding the legislative review, and clauses 169 to 172 dealing with coming into force provisions.

● (1530)

(The House divided on the elements, which were agreed to on the following division:)

(Division No. 871)

YEAS

Members

Aldag
Alleslev
Anandasangaree
Arya
Badawey
Baylis
Alghabra
Amos
Arseneault
Ayoub
Bains
Beech
Bennett
Bittle
Boissonnault
Bratina
Brison
Carr
Casey (Charlottetown)
Champagne
Cuzner
Damoff
Dhaliwal
Di Iorio
Dubourg
Duguid
Easter
El Khoury
Erskine Smith
Eyolfson
Fillmore
Fisher
Fortier
Fraser (West Nova)
Freeland
Garneau
Goldsmith Jones
Gould
Grewal
Hébert
Hogg
Housefather
Hutchings
Jones
Jowhari
Khalid
Lambropoulos
Lamoureux
Lauzon (Argenteuil—La Petite-Nation)
Lebouthillier
Levitt
Lockhart
Longfield
MacKinnon (Gatineau)
Massé (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia)
May (Cambridge)
May (Saanich—Gulf Islands)
McDonald
McKay
McLeod (Northwest Territories)
Mendicino
Miller (Ville-Marie—Le Sud-Ouest—Île-des-Sœurs)
Monsef
Morneau
Murray
Nault
O'Connell
Oliver
Ouellette
Peschisolido
Petitpas Taylor
Picard
Qualtrough
Rioux
Rodriguez
Romanado
Rudd
Rusnak
Saini
Samson
Sarai
Schiefke
Serré
Shanahan
Sidhu (Mission—Matsqui—Fraser Canyon)
Sikand
Sohi
Spengemann
Tan
Vandal
Vaughan
Whalen
Wilson-Raybould
Yip
Bibeau
Blair
Bossio
Breton
Caesar-Chavannes
Casey (Cumberland—Colchester)
Chagger
Chen
Dabrusin
DeCourcey
Dhillon
Drouin
Duclos
Dzerowicz
Ehsassi
Ellis
Eyking
Fergus
Finnigan
Fonseca
Fragiskatos
Fraser (Central Nova)
Fuhr
Gerretsen
Goodale
Graham
Hardie
Hehr
Holland
Hussen
Iacono
Jordan
Kang
Khera
Lametti
Lapointe
LeBlanc
Lefebvre
Lightbound
Long
MacAulay (Cardigan)
Maloney
McCrimmon
McGuinty
McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)
Mendès
Mihychuk
Morrissey
Nassif
Ng
Oliphant
O'Regan
Paradis
Peterson
Philpott
Poissant
Ratansi
Robillard
Rogers
Rota
Ruimy
Sahota
Sajjan
Sangha
Scarpaleggia
Schulte
Sgro
Sheehan
Sidhu (Brampton South)
Simms
Sorbara
Tabbara
Tassi
Vandenbeld
Virani
Wilkinson
Wrzesnewskyj
Young — 172

NAYS

Members

Aboultaif	Albas
Albrecht	Allison
Anderson	Arnold
Aubin	Barlow
Barsalou-Duval	Beaulieu
Benson	Benzen
Bergen	Bernier
Berthold	Bezan
Blaikie	Blaney (North Island—Powell River)
Blaney (Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis)	Block
Boucher	Boudrias
Boulerice	Boutin-Sweet
Brassard	Brosseau
Calkins	Cannings
Caron	Carrie
Chong	Choquette
Christopherson	Clarke
Cooper	Cullen
Davies	Deltell
Diotte	Doherty
Donnelly	Dreeshen
Dubé	Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona)
Dusseault	Duvall
Eglinski	Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)
Falk (Provencher)	Finley
Fortin	Gallant
Garrison	Généreux
Genuis	Godin
Gourde	Hardcastle
Harder	Hoback
Hughes	Jeneroux
Johns	Jolibois
Kelly	Kent
Kitchen	Kusie
Kwan	Lake
Lauzon (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)	Laverdière
Leitch	Liepert
Lloyd	Lobb
Lukiwski	MacGregor
MacKenzie	Maguire
Malcolmson	Marcil
Masse (Windsor West)	Mathyssen
McCauley (Edmonton West)	McLeod (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo)
Miller (Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound)	Motz
Nantel	Nater
Nicholson	Nuttall
O'Toole	Paul-Hus
Pauzé	Plamondon
Poilievre	Quach
Raitt	Ramsey
Rankin	Rayes
Reid	Rempel
Richards	Sansoucy
Saroya	Schmale
Shields	Sopuck
Sorenson	Stanton
Ste-Marie	Stetski
Stewart	Strahl
Stubbs	Sweet
Thériault	Tilson
Trost	Trudel
Van Kesteren	Van Loan
Vecchio	Viersen
Wagantall	Warkentin
Waugh	Webber
Weir	Wong
Yurdiga	Zimmer — 134

PAIRED

Nil

The Speaker: I declare these elements carried.

[*English*]

The next question is on part 6 of the bill and the coming into force provisions contained in clause 173.

● (1535)

(The House divided on part 6 and clause 173, which were agreed to on the following division:)

(Division No. 872)

YEAS

Members

Aboultaif	Albas
Albrecht	Aldag
Alghabra	Alleslev
Allison	Amos
Anandasangaree	Anderson
Arnold	Arseneault
Arya	Ayoub
Badawey	Bains
Barlow	Baylis
Beech	Bennett
Benzen	Bergen
Bernier	Berthold
Bezan	Ribeau
Bittle	Blair
Blaney (Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis)	Block
Boissonnault	Bossio
Boucher	Brassard
Bratina	Breton
Brison	Caesar-Chavannes
Calkins	Carr
Carrie	Casey (Cumberland—Colchester)
Casey (Charlottetown)	Chagger
Champagne	Chen
Chong	Clarke
Cooper	Cuzner
Dabrusin	Damoff
DeCourcey	Deltell
Dhaliwal	Dhillon
Di Iorio	Diotte
Doherty	Dreeshen
Dronin	Dubourg
Duclos	Duguid
Dzerowicz	Easter
Eglinski	Ehsassi
El-Khoury	Ellis
Erskine-Smith	Eyking
Eyolfson	Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)
Falk (Provencher)	Fergus
Fillmore	Finley
Finnigan	Fisher
Fonseca	Fortier
Fragiskatos	Fraser (West Nova)
Fraser (Central Nova)	Freeland
Fuhr	Gallant
Garneau	Généreux
Genuis	Gerretsen
Godin	Goldsmith-Jones
Goodale	Gould
Gourde	Graham
Grewal	Harder
Hardie	Hébert
Hehr	Hoback
Hogg	Holland
Housefather	Hussen
Hutchings	Iacono
Jeneroux	Jones
Jordan	Jowhari
Kang	Kelly
Kent	Khalid
Khera	Kitchen
Kusie	Lake
Lambropoulos	Lametti
Lamoureux	Lapointe
Lauzon (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)	Lauzon (Argenteuil—La Petite-Nation)
LeBlanc	Lebouthillier
Lefebvre	Leitch
Levitt	Liepert
Lightbound	Lloyd
Lobb	Lockhart
Long	Longfield
Lukiwski	MacAulay (Cardigan)
MacKenzie	MacKinnon (Gatineau)

Maguire
Maloney
Massé (Avignon La Mitis Matane Matapédia)
May (Cambridge)
May (Saanich Gulf Islands)
McCauley (Edmonton West)
McCrimmon
McDonald
McGuinty
McKay
McKinnon (Coquitlam Port Coquitlam)
McLeod (Kamloops Thompson Cariboo)
McLeod (Northwest Territories)
Mendès
Mendicino
Mihychuk
Miller (Bruce Grey Owen Sound)
Miller (Ville-Marie Le Sud-Ouest Île-des-Soeurs)
Monsef
Morneau
Morrissey
Motz
Murray
Nassif
Nater
Nault
Ng
Nicholson
Nuttall
O'Connell
Oliphant
Oliver
O'Regan
O'Toole
Ouellette
Paradis
Paul-Hus
Peschisolido
Peterson
Petitpas Taylor
Philpott
Picard
Poilievre
Poissant
Qualtrough
Raitt
Ratansi
Rayes
Reid
Rempel
Richards
Rioux
Robillard
Rodriguez
Rogers
Romanado
Rota
Rudd
Ruimy
Rusnak
Sahota
Saini
Sajjan
Samson
Sangha
Sarai
Saroya
Scarpaleggia
Schiefke
Schmale
Schulte
Serré
Sgro
Shanahan
Sheehan
Shields
Sidhu (Mission Matsqui Fraser Canyon)
Sidhu (Brampton South)
Sikand
Simms
Sohi
Sopuck
Sorbara
Sorenson
Spengemann
Stanton
Strahl
Stubbs
Sweet
Tabbara
Tan
Tassi
Tilson
Trust
Van Kesteren
Van Loan
Vandal
Vandenbeld
Vaughan
Vecchio
Viersen
Virani
Wagantall
Warkentin
Waugh
Webber
Whalen
Wilkinson
Wilson-Raybould
Wong
Wrzesnewskyj
Yip
Young
Yurdiga
Zimmer 259

NAYS

Members

Aubin
Barsalou-Duval
Beaulieu
Benson
Blaikie
Blaney (North Island Powell River)
Boudrias
Boulerice
Boutin-Sweet
Brosseau
Cannings
Caron
Choquette
Christopherson
Cullen
Davies
Donnelly
Dubé
Duncan (Edmonton Strathcona)
Dusseault
Duvall
Fortin
Garrison
Hardcastle
Hughes
Johns
Jolibois
Kwan
Laverdière
MacGregor
Malcolmson
Marcil
Masse (Windsor West)
Mathyssen
Nantel
Pauzé
Plamondon
Quach
Ramsey
Rankin
Sansoucy
Ste-Marie
Stetski
Stewart
Thériault
Trudel
Weir 47

PAIRED

Nil

The Speaker: I declare these elements carried.

[*Translation*]

The next question is on parts 7 and 8 of the bill.

● (1545)

[*English*]

(The House divided on parts 7 and 8, which were agreed to on the following division:)

(Division No. 873)

YEAS

Members

Aldag
Alghabra
Allesley
Amos
Anandasangaree
Arseneault
Arya
Ayoub
Badawey
Bains
Barsalou-Duval
Baylis
Beaulieu
Beech
Bennett
Bibeau
Bittle
Blair
Boissonnault
Bossio
Boudrias
Bratina
Breton
Brison
Caesar-Chavannes
Carr
Casey (Cumberland Colchester)
Casey (Charlottetown)
Chagger
Champagne
Chen
Cuzner
Dabrusin
Damoff
DeCourcey
Dhaliwal
Dhillon
Di Iorio
Drouin
Dubourg
Duclos
Duguid
Dzerowicz
Easter
Ehsassi
El-Khoury
Ellis
Erskine-Smith
Eyking
Eyolfson
Fergus
Fillmore
Finnigan
Fisher
Fonseca
Fortier
Fragiskatos
Fraser (West Nova)
Fraser (Central Nova)
Freeland
Fuhr
Garneau
Gerretsen
Goldsmith-Jones
Goodale
Gould
Graham
Grewal
Hardie
Hébert
Hehr
Hogg
Holland
Housefather
Hussen
Hutchings
Iacono
Jones
Jordan
Jowhari
Kang
Khalid
Khera
Lambropoulos
Lametti
Lamoureux
Lapointe
Lauzon (Argenteuil La Petite-Nation)
LeBlanc
Lebouthillier
Lefebvre
Levitt
Lightbound
Lockhart
Long
Longfield
MacAulay (Cardigan)
MacKinnon (Gatineau)
Maloney
Marcil
Massé (Avignon La Mitis Matane Matapédia)
May (Cambridge)
May (Saanich Gulf Islands)
McCrimmon
McDonald
McGuinty
McKay
McKinnon (Coquitlam Port Coquitlam)
McLeod (Northwest Territories)
Mendès

Mendicino
Miller (Ville Marie—Le Sud-Ouest—Île des Sœurs)
Monsef
Morneau
Murray
Nault
O'Connell
Oliver
Ouellette
Peschisolido
Petitpas Taylor
Picard
Qualtrough
Rioux
Rodriguez
Romanado
Rudd
Rusnak
Saini
Samson
Sarai
Schiefke
Serré
Shanahan
Sidhu (Mission—Matsqui—Fraser Canyon)
Sikand
Sohi
Spengemann
Tan
Vandal
Vaughan
Whalen
Wilson-Raybould
Yip
Mihychuk
Morrissey
Nassif
Ng
Oliphant
O'Regan
Paradis
Peterson
Philpott
Poissant
Ratansi
Robillard
Rogers
Rota
Ruimy
Sahota
Sajjan
Sangha
Scarpaleggia
Schulte
Sgro
Sheehan
Sidhu (Brampton South)
Simms
Sorbara
Tabbara
Tassi
Vandenbeld
Virani
Wilkinson
Wrzesnewskyj
Young — 176

NAYS

Members

Aboultaif
Albrecht
Anderson
Aubin
Benson
Bergen
Berthold
Blaikie
Blaney (Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis)
Boucher
Boutin-Sweet
Brosseau
Cannings
Carrie
Choquette
Clarke
Cullen
Deltell
Doherty
Dreeshen
Duncan (Edmonton Strathcona)
Duvall
Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)
Finley
Gallant
Généreux
Godin
Hardcastle
Hoback
Jeneroux
Jolibois
Kent
Kusie
Lake
Laverdière
Liepert
Lobb
MacGregor
Maguire
Masse (Windsor West)
McCauley (Edmonton West)
Miller (Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound)
Nantel
Nicholson
O'Toole
Albas
Allison
Arnold
Barlow
Benzen
Bernier
Bezan
Blaney (North Island—Powell River)
Block
Boulerice
Brassard
Calkins
Caron
Chong
Christopherson
Cooper
Davies
Diotte
Donnelly
Dubé
Dusseault
Eglinski
Falk (Provencher)
Fortin
Garrison
Genuis
Gourde
Harder
Hughes
Johns
Kelly
Kitchen
Kwan
Lauzon (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)
Leitch
Lloyd
Lukiwski
MacKenzie
Malcolmson
Mathyssen
McLeod (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo)
Motz
Nater
Nuttall
Paul-Hus
Pauzé
Poilievre
Ramsey
Rayes
Rempel
Sansoucy
Schmale
Sopuck
Stanton
Stetski
Strahl
Sweet
Tilson
Trudel
Van Loan
Viersen
Warkentin
Webber
Wong
Zimmer — 129
Plamondon
Quach
Rankin
Reid
Richards
Saroya
Shields
Sorenson
Ste-Marie
Stewart
Stubbs
Thériault
Trost
Van Kesteren
Vecchio
Wagantall
Waugh
Weir
Yurdiga

PAIRED

Nil

The Speaker: I declare these elements carried.

The House has agreed to the entirety of Bill C-59, an act respecting national security matters at the third reading stage.

(Bill read the third time and passed)

* * *

[*Translation*]

WRECKED, ABANDONED OR HAZARDOUS VESSELS ACT

The House resumed consideration of Bill C-64, An Act respecting wrecks, abandoned, dilapidated or hazardous vessels and salvage operations, as reported (with amendments) from the committee, and of Motion No. 1.

The Speaker: Pursuant to order made Tuesday, May 29, the House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the motion at report stage of Bill C-64.

● (1555)

[*English*]

(The House divided on Motion No. 1, which was negatived on the following division:)

(Division No. 874)

YEAS

Members

Aubin
Beaulieu
Blaikie
Boudrias
Boutin-Sweet
Cannings
Choquette
Cullen
Donnelly
Duncan (Edmonton Strathcona)
Duvall
Garrison
Hughes
Jolibois
Laverdière
Malcolmson
Masse (Windsor West)
May (Saanich—Gulf Islands)
Pauzé
Quach
Rankin
Barsalou-Duval
Benson
Blaney (North Island—Powell River)
Boulerice
Brosseau
Caron
Christopherson
Davies
Dubé
Dusseault
Fortin
Hardcastle
Johns
Kwan
MacGregor
Mareil
Mathyssen
Nantel
Plamondon
Ramsey
Sansoucy

Ste-Marie
Stewart
Trudel

Stetski
Thériault
Weir — 48

NAYS

Members

Aboultaif
Albrecht
Alghabra
Allison
Anandasangaree
Arnold
Arya
Badawey
Barlow
Beech
Benzen
Bernier
Bezan
Bittle
Blaney (Bellechasse — Les Etchemins — Lévis)
Boissonnault
Boucher
Bratina
Brison
Calkins
Carrie
Casey (Charlottetown)
Champagne
Chong
Cooper
Dabrusin
DeCourcey
Dhaliwal
Di Iorio
Doherty
Drouin
Duclos
Dzerowicz
Eglinski
El Khoury
Erskine-Smith
Eyolfson
Falk (Provencher)
Fillmore
Finnigan
Fonseca
Fragiskatos
Fraser (Central Nova)
Fuhr
Garneau
Gennis
Godin
Goodale
Gourde
Grewal
Hardie
Hehr
Hogg
Housefather
Hutchings
Jeneroux
Jordan
Kelly
Khalid
Kitchen
Lake
Lametti
Lapointe
Lauzon (Argenteuil — La Petite-Nation)
Lebouthillier
Leitch
Liepert
Lloyd
Lockhart
Longfield
MacAulay (Cardigan)
MacKinnon (Gatineau)
Maloney
May (Cambridge)
McCrimmon
McGuinty
McKinnon (Coquitlam — Port Coquitlam)
McLeod (Northwest Territories)
Mendicino
Miller (Bruce — Grey — Owen Sound)
Moore
Morrissey
Murray
Nater
Ng
Nuttall
Oliphant
O'Regan
Ouellette
Paul-Hus
Peterson
Philpott
Poilievre
Qualtrough
Ratansi
Reid
Richards
Robillard
Rogers
Rota
Ruimy
Sahota
Sajjan
Sangha
Saroya
Schiefke
Schulte
Sgro
Sheehan
Sidhu (Mission — Matsqui — Fraser Canyon)
Sikand
Sohi
Sorbara
Spengemann
Strahl
Sweet
Tan
Tilson
Van Kesteren
Vandal
Vaughan
Viersen
Wagantall
Waugh
Whalen
Wilson-Raybould
Wrzesnewskyj
Young
Zimmer — 257

Albas
Aldag
Allesley
Amos
Anderson
Arseneault
Ayoub
Bains
Baylis
Bennett
Bergen
Berthold
Bibeau
Blair
Block
Bossio
Brassard
Breton
Caesar-Chavannes
Carr
Casey (Cumberland — Colchester)
Chagger
Chen
Clarke
Cuzner
Damoff
DeBell
Dhillon
Diotte
Dreeshen
Dubourg
Duguid
Easter
Ehsassi
Ellis
Eyking
Falk (Battlefords — Lloydminster)
Fergus
Finley
Fisher
Fortier
Fraser (West Nova)
Freeland
Gaffney
Généreux
Gerretsen
Goldsmith-Jones
Gould
Graham
Harder
Hébert
Huback
Holland
Hussen
Iacono
Jones
Jowhari
Kent
Khera
Kusie
Lambropoulos
Lamoureux
Lauzon (Stormont — Dundas — South Glengarry)
LeBlanc
Lefebvre
Levitt
Lightbound
Lobb
Long
Lukiwski
MacKenzie
Maguire
Massé (Avignon — La Mitis — Matane — Matapédia)
McCauley (Edmonton West)
McDonald
McKay
McLeod (Kamloops — Thompson — Cariboo)
Mendès
Mihychuk
Miller (Ville-Marie — Le Sud-Ouest — Île-des-Sœurs)
Monsef
Morneau
Motz
Nassif
Nault
Nicholson
O'Connell
Oliver
O'Toole
Paradis
Peschisolido
Petitpas Taylor
Picard
Poissant
Raitt
Rayes
Rempel
Rioux
Rodriguez
Romanado
Rudd
Rusnak
Saini
Samson
Sarai
Scarpaleggia
Schmale
Serré
Shanahan
Shields
Sidhu (Brampton South)
Simms
Sopuck
Sorenson
Stanton
Stubbs
Tabbara
Tassi
Trost
Van Loan
Vandenbeld
Vecchio
Virani
Warkentin
Webber
Wilkinson
Wong
Yip
Yurdiga

PAIRED

Nil

The Speaker: I declare Motion No. 1 defeated.

[*Translation*]

Hon. Marc Garneau (Minister of Transport, Lib.) moved that Bill C-64, An Act respecting wrecks, abandoned, dilapidated or hazardous vessels and salvage operations, as amended, be concurred in.

The Speaker: The question is on the motion. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

The Speaker: All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

Some hon. members: Yea.

The Speaker: All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

The Speaker: In my opinion the yeas have it.

And five or more members having risen:

● (1605)

[*English*]

(The House divided on the motion, which was agreed to on the following division:)

(Division No. 875)

YEAS

Members

Aboultaif
Albrecht
Alghabra
Allison
Anandasangaree
Arnold
Arya
Ayoub
Bains
Barsalou-Duval
Beaulieu
Bennett
Benzen
Bernier
Bezan
Bittle
Blair
Blaney (Bellechasse — Les Etchemins — Lévis)
Boissonnault
Boucher
Boulerice
Brassard
Breton
Brosseau
Calkins
Caron
Carrie
Casey (Charlottetown)
Champagne
Chong
Christopherson
Cooper
Cuzner
Damoff
DeCourcey
Dhaliwal
Di Iorio
Doherty
Dreeshen
Dubé
Duclos
Duncan (Edmonton Strathcona)
Duvall
Easter
Ehsassi
Ellis
Eyking
Falk (Battlefords — Lloydminster)
Fergus
Finley
Fisher
Fortier
Fragiskatos
Fraser (Central Nova)
Fuhr
Garneau
Généreux
Gerretsen
Goldsmith-Jones
Gould
Graham
Hardcastle
Albas
Aldag
Alleslev
Amos
Anderson
Arseneault
Aubin
Badawey
Barlow
Baylis
Beech
Benson
Bergen
Berthold
Bibeau
Blaikie
Blaney (North Island — Powell River)
Block
Bossio
Boudrias
Boutin-Sweet
Bratina
Brison
Caesar-Chavannes
Cannings
Carr
Casey (Cumberland — Colchester)
Chagger
Chen
Choquette
Clarke
Cullen
Dabrusin
Davies
Deltell
Dhillon
Diotte
Donnelly
Drouin
Dubourg
Duguid
Dusseault
Dzerowicz
Eglinski
El-Khoury
Erskine-Smith
Eyolfson
Falk (Provencher)
Fillmore
Finnigan
Fonseca
Fortin
Fraser (West Nova)
Freeland
Gallant
Garrison
Genuis
Godin
Goodale
Gourde
Grewal
Harder
Hardie
Hehr
Hogg
Housefather
Hussen
Iacono
Johns
Jones
Jowhari
Kelly
Khalid
Kitchen
Kwan
Lambropoulos
Lamoureux
Lauzon (Stormont — Dundas — South Glengarry)
Laverdière
Lebouthillier
Leitch
Liepert
Lloyd
Lockhart
Longfield
MacAulay (Cardigan)
MacKenzie
Maguire
Maloney
Masse (Windsor West)
Mathyssen
May (Saanich — Gulf Islands)
McCrimmon
McGuinty
McKinnon (Coquitlam — Port Coquitlam)
McLeod (Northwest Territories)
Mendicino
Miller (Bruce — Grey — Owen Sound)
Hébert
Hoback
Holland
Hughes
Hutchings
Jeneroux
Jolibois
Jordan
Kang
Kent
Khera
Kusie
Lake
Lametti
Lapointe
Lauzon (Argenteuil — La Petite-Nation)
LeBlanc
Lefebvre
Levitt
Lightbound
Lobb
Long
Lukiwski
MacGregor
MacKinnon (Gatineau)
Malcolmson
Marcil
Massé (Avignon — La Mitis — Matane — Matapédia)
May (Cambridge)
McCauley (Edmonton West)
McDonald
McKay
McLeod (Kamloops — Thompson — Cariboo)
Mendès
Mihychuk
Miller (Ville-Marie — Le Sud-Ouest — Île-des-Sœurs)
Monsef
Morneau
Motz
Nantel
Nater
Ng
Nuttall
Oliphant
O'Regan
Ouellette
Paul-Hus
Peschisolido
Petitpas Taylor
Picard
Poilievre
Quach
Raitt
Rankin
Rayes
Rempel
Rioux
Rodriguez
Romanado
Rudd
Rusnak
Saini
Samson
Sansoucy
Saroya
Schiefke
Schulte
Sgro
Sheehan
Sidhu (Mission — Matsqui — Fraser Canyon)
Sikand
Sohi
Sorbara
Spengemann
Ste-Marie
Stewart
Stubbs
Tabbara
Tassi
Tilson
Trudel
Van Loan
Vandenbeld
Vecchio
Monsef
Morrissey
Murray
Nassif
Nault
Nicholson
O'Connell
Oliver
O'Toole
Paradis
Pauzé
Peterson
Philpott
Plamondon
Poissant
Qualtrough
Ramsey
Ratansi
Reid
Richards
Robillard
Rogers
Rota
Ruimy
Sahota
Sajjan
Sangha
Sarai
Scarpaleggia
Schmale
Serré
Shanahan
Shields
Sidhu (Brampton South)
Simms
Sopuck
Sorenson
Stanton
Stetski
Strahl
Sweet
Tan
Thériault
Trost
Van Kesteren
Vandal
Vaughan

Viersen	Viran
Wagantall	Warkentin
Waugh	Webber
Weir	Whalen
Wilkinson	Wilson Raybould
Wong	Wrzesnewskyj
Yip	Young
Yurdiga	Zimmer 306

NAYS

Nil

PAIRED

Nil

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

* * *

RESIGNATION OF MEMBER

Mr. Kennedy Stewart (Burnaby South, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it is with mixed feelings that I rise today to give my final speech here in this place.

I was elected on May 2, 2011, under the leadership of Jack Layton, who will forever live in my heart as one of the greatest political leaders Canada has ever seen. I was elected with 102 other NDP MPs. We formed the first New Democratic official opposition in the history of this country, and I am very proud of that.

The day after my election, I was called by the Kinder Morgan president, Ian Anderson, who informed me of his plans to build a new bitumen export pipeline from Edmonton to Burnaby, and so began my odyssey of fighting what I view as a terrible project for my community. I will not give up. I will not give up fighting even after I leave this place, and I hope that the government sees sense and cancels this pipeline.

While my life here in Ottawa has been centred on fighting Kinder Morgan, it has been much more than that. I have made great friends, both within my own party and within others. Each time I stand to vote with my NDP colleagues, I know we are the party that fights for all Canadians, the party that exists to protect and further the interests of workers and marginalized people. I urge my fellow New Democrats to never give up and to keep working toward the day when we will form the first NDP government in Canadian history.

I have also enjoyed co-operating with others, including you, Mr. Speaker, to improve democracy. I was very grateful to members of other parties who voted for my motion to bring electronic petitioning to the House of Commons, a program in which now approximately two million Canadians have participated.

I also very much enjoyed working with those who contributed chapters to our book *Turning Parliament Inside Out*, and I challenge others to look for ways to make Ottawa more democratic, especially working to ensure that women come to hold 50% of the seats in this place in the not too distant future.

I wish to thank all those who have travelled with me on this journey and, of course, the voters from both Burnaby Douglas and Burnaby South, who granted me the great privilege of representing them; my current and past staff, who are second to none; the outstanding NDP staff team here in Ottawa; those who have volunteered in my campaigns; and my local executives.

Speaker's Ruling

Finally, I would like to thank my family and friends for always sticking by me and forgiving my absences and the stresses of this job. Most of all, I want to thank the love of my life, Dr. Jeanette Ashe, for her support, wisdom, and patience. It has been a great adventure here, but it would have been nothing if I could not share it with her.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for this indulgence and for your good work in the Chair. I will miss this place very much, but I hope everyone will wish me luck in my new political adventure as I seek to become Vancouver's next mayor and bring the lessons and values I learned in this place to Vancouver City Hall.

● (1610)

The Speaker: Allow me to thank the hon. member for Burnaby South for his statement. I also wish to thank him for his service. It has been a great pleasure knowing him.

As Speaker, I am not sure I am allowed to get involved in these questions of municipal elections, but I will certainly wish him all the best in his future endeavours, whatever they may be.

* * *

PRIVILEGE

FIREARMS ACT—SPEAKER'S RULING

The Speaker: I am now prepared to rule on the question of privilege raised on May 29, 2018 by the hon. member for Medicine Hat—Cardston—Warner concerning documents published on the website of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police in relation to Bill C-71, an act to amend certain acts and regulations in relation to firearms.

[*Translation*]

I would like to thank the member for Medicine Hat—Cardston—Warner for having raised the matter, as well as the parliamentary secretary to the government House leader for his comments.

[*English*]

In presenting his case, the member for Medicine Hat—Cardston—Warner contended that information on the RCMP website led readers to believe that Bill C-71 had already been enacted by acknowledging neither the parliamentary process nor the fact that the bill remains subject to parliamentary approval. He added that the presumptuous language used, including such phrases as "will be impacted", "will become prohibited", and "is affected", is proof of contempt of Parliament.

[*Translation*]

The member returned to the House the next day to explain that the website in question had been updated that day to include a disclaimer about Bill C-71 in fact being a proposed law. He viewed this as an admission of fault.

For his part, the parliamentary secretary to the government House leader explained that the matter raised was simply one of debate as there was clearly no presumption of anything in the information respecting Bill C-71 on the RCMP website.

Speaker's Ruling

[*English*]

As the charge being made by the member for Medicine Hat—Cardston—Warner is one of contempt, the Chair must determine if the information provided on the RCMP website does in fact anticipate a decision of Parliament. If it does, this would offend the authority of the House.

Having reviewed in detail the relevant information on the website, before the disclaimer was added, I found instances where some provisions of the bill were in fact framed as legislative proposals, using such phrases as "proposed legislation" and "is expected to be". Despite these statements, the vast majority of the information was presented as though the provisions will definitively be coming into effect or are already the law of the land. Nowhere did I find any indication the bill was still in committee and was not yet enacted law.

[*Translation*]

Further to this, I reviewed the material to try to determine if the assertions being made could be related to existing regulations or statutory provisions. I can confirm that, although some elements of the information are rooted in existing statutory or regulatory provisions, many more would be new measures that would come into force only with the enactment of Bill C-71.

[*English*]

The member for Medicine Hat—Cardston—Warner did acknowledge that some of the language is conditional but, even then, the Chair shares the member's concern that the website information suggests that the only approval required is that of the government.

Parliament's authority in scrutinizing and adopting legislative proposals remains unquestionable and should not be taken for granted. The Chair is troubled by the careless manner in which the RCMP chose to ignore this vital fact and, for more than three weeks, allowed citizens and retailers to draw improper conclusions as to their obligations under the law. Changing the website after the fact does little to alleviate these concerns. Parliamentarians and citizens should be able to trust that officials responsible for disseminating information related to legislation are paying attention to what is happening in Parliament and are providing a clear and accurate history of the bills in question.

● (1615)

[*Translation*]

The work of members as legislators is fundamental and any hint or suggestion of this parliamentary role and authority being bypassed or usurped is not acceptable. The government and the public service also have important roles when it comes to legislation, but these are entirely distinct from those of members as legislators. In fact, part of their responsibility is to state loud and clear that legislation comes from Parliament and nowhere else.

[*English*]

As the member for Medicine Hat—Cardston—Warner reminded us, some 30 years ago, Speaker Fraser had cause to state on October 10, 1989, at page 4461 of the *Debates* in ruling on a similar matter:

> This is a case which, in my opinion, should never recur. I expect the Department of Finance and other departments to study this ruling carefully and remind everyone within the Public Service that we are a parliamentary democracy, not a so-called executive democracy, nor a so-called administrative democracy.

[*Translation*]

Again, on November 6, 1997, at page 1618 of the *Debates*, Speaker Parent was equally clear about the respect owed to the authority of the House, stating:

> This dismissive view of the legislative process, repeated often enough, makes a mockery of our parliamentary conventions and practices.

[*English*]

As Speaker, I cannot turn a blind eye to an approach by a government agency that overlooks the role of Parliament. To do otherwise would make us compliant in denigrating the authority and dignity of Parliament.

Accordingly, the Chair finds this to be a prima facie matter of contempt of the House. I invite the member for Medicine Hat—Cardston—Warner to move the appropriate motion.

I thank all hon. members for their attention.

REFERENCE TO STANDING COMMITTEE ON PROCEDURE AND HOUSE AFFAIRS

Mr. Glen Motz (Medicine Hat—Cardston—Warner, CPC): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate your ruling. I move:

> That the matter of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police publications respecting Bill C-71, an Act to amend certain Acts and Regulations in relation to firearms, be referred to the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs.

I appreciate that the Speaker reviewed the evidence that was before the House and made a ruling based on the evidence that I feel was very strong. For those who are involved and may be hearing this for the first time, let me briefly reiterate exactly what happened.

The Royal Canadian Mounted Police, in its online publication, started in early April explaining to the Canadian public some aspects of Bill C-71. It was language that made the public believe that Bill C-71 was, in fact, passed by Parliament and already enacted in law and to be abided by.

It was listed in "RCMP Special Business Bulletin No. 93" and used presumptuous language, with phrases such as, "CZ firearms will be impacted by changes in their classification", and, "businesses will need to determine if their firearm(s) will be affected by these changes." It went on to explain that Swiss Arms firearms will also become prohibited. If one owns SA firearms, it identified the steps one would need to take, because they would be affected by Bill C-71. It went on to explain the grandfathering clauses and how to avoid being in illegal possession of a firearm, as if Bill C-71 had, in fact, been enacted.

The language used was "will be impacted", will become "prohibited", and "will be affected". The language it could have used was "it could be" or "may be" or "might be" affected.

Later on in that same bulletin, the RCMP website went on to say, "Business owners will continue to be authorized to transfer any and all CZ and SA firearms in their inventory to properly licenced individuals, until the relevant provisions of Bill C-71 come into force." Before one thinks that the language presumes that it is going to come into force, it did not concede that it needed parliamentary approval first, as we know today.

The second document the RCMP had on its website was "How does Bill C-71 affect individuals?" In that particular document, it also used very presumptuous language. A lot of it mirrors what I already indicated was in Special Business Bulletin No. 93. Passages included, "If your SA firearm was listed in Bill C-71, it will be classified as a prohibited firearm." Again, it said, "was listed", as if Bill C-71 was a document from the past and not a bill that is currently before the House.

It went on and said that "for grandfathering of your currently non-restricted or restricted CZ/SA firearm, the following criteria must be met". Again, it went through a whole list of details for firearms to meet, which, coincidentally, happen to be laid out exactly, almost word for word, in clause 3 of Bill C71. Again, there is no indication that these proposals were just that. They were proposals before a committee to be studied by parliamentarians, let alone sanctioned or in effect.

I received a number of calls on this prior to it coming to our attention. There was great concern across Canadian law-abiding firearm ownership groups across the country.

One of the passages I referred to earlier explained the grandfathering requirements and how to avoid being in illegal possession of a firearm. It said, "If your SA firearm was listed in Bill C-71, it will be classified as a prohibited firearm."

● (1620)

Conservatives have been clear all along. There have been concerns raised about Bill C-71. There have been great concerns voiced by the Canadian firearms public that the proposed changes to the rules in Bill C-71 would require the RCMP to be the be-all and end-all on firearms classification and reclassification. The Conservatives gave the Governor in Council an oversight role, and Bill C-71 took that oversight role away from the Governor in Council and gave it to the RCMP.

I am not going to take the time of the House to explain all of them, but the RCMP has made a number of very grave mistakes when it comes to the classification and reclassification of firearms. It needs to be involved, but it cannot and should not be the final arbiter in the classification of firearms. The reality is that the RCMP is there to enforce the law, not create it. That is our role. Do we need RCMP experts and firearm-owner experts across the country to be part of the classification process? Absolutely. Should they make recommendations to the House? Absolutely. However, it is the House that makes that decision, not the RCMP by itself. That is one of the many flaws in Bill C-71.

Under the regime the Liberals are proposing in Bill C-71, all law-abiding Canadian gun owners who follow all the rules and regulations on firearms could suddenly find themselves, because of one meeting with some bureaucrats, declared criminals because they possess illegal firearms, when they have owned and used those firearms for sports shooting or hunting for many years. Suddenly, with one blanket move and without oversight, dozens, hundreds, or even thousands of people who already possess guns could be deemed illegal. That flies in the face of common sense for all Canadians, and certainly for law-abiding Canadian gun owners. We have seen disrespect before for law-abiding Canadian gun owners, and we do not want to keep seeing it happen.

What is even more distressing about this whole process is that the Minister of Public Safety, who oversees the RCMP, should have made it very clear to that organization that this bill has not passed in Parliament and is still before committee. He is one of the most experienced members we have and should be urging the agencies that work under his purview as Minister of Public Safety to have respect for Parliament. The RCMP is not above the law or above the requirements of Parliament and the House of Commons.

As the Speaker indicated in his ruling, the fact that the RCMP changed the website the day after the question of privilege was presented was proof positive, and many Canadians believe the same thing, that it put that provision in there. I do not want anyone to misunderstand me. I do not believe for a moment that the RCMP acted on its own. I am sure that someone would have called someone in the public safety office of the government to ask whether it should go ahead with this. I do not believe for a moment that the RCMP acted on its own. The failure of the government, and not only on Bill C-71, which would do nothing to address the issue Canadians want addressed, which is guns and gang violence, goes to show the contempt that exists in a majority government when it has lost touch with Canadians.

I appreciate the ruling of the Chair and respect the fact that the critical role of Parliament to ensure that Canadians continue to have support and believe in democracy in this place was upheld today. For that, I give credit to the Speaker for his ruling.

● (1625)

Mr. Pat Kelly (Calgary Rocky Ridge, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would ask the member for Medicine Hat—Cardston—Warner to elaborate on the seriousness of what we have heard today is a prima facie case of contempt in this episode. He spoke of arrogance and whether it was deliberate or a lack of oversight on the part of the minister responsible such that something like this could happen. I would ask the member to comment further on that.

Mr. Glen Motz: Mr. Speaker, the first aspect is the seriousness of this. What is presumed to have happened is that unwittingly, Canadians could believe that they are committing a criminal offence with respect to firearms and their possession of them, and some of those offences could have a sentence of up to five years.

Canadians believe that the RCMP, our national police service, speaks the truth, and when the RCMP is presumptuous in its language, it can cause great confusion. The arrogance and the lack of oversight is a greater aspect of seriousness with respect to the Liberal government. We have a government body that oversees our highly respected national police service, and it should be respected, because it does great work in this country.

Officials were at committee talking about Bill C-71, but for them to presume, as I indicated earlier, that this was a done deal means that someone at Public Safety Canada provided the okay and said that the bill was going to pass anyway, because the Liberals have a majority. That arrogance is alarming to Canadians.

● (1630)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the government regrets that the situation took place and has taken steps to rectify it. We support sending this issue to PROC for further study.

As the member for Medicine Hat—Cardston—Warner moved the motion, would he not agree that it would be the best course to resolve this matter?

Mr. Glen Motz: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the comments of the Parliamentary Secretary to the Government House Leader. I appreciate the support from the government that this is a serious matter and that it be given to PROC to study and explore. I, on behalf of my colleagues on this side of the House, appreciate the support to have that done, because it is something we need to fix.

Mr. Earl Dreeshen (Red Deer—Mountain View, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this is an issue that many people are seized with. There has been commentary in this place about how officials at Elections Canada had gone as far as starting to make changes based on the assumption that other legislation in this place was going to pass.

As the member just mentioned, it is a concern that these departments or groups are moving ahead on the assumption that because it is in legislation, it should be okay. The member indicated that someone had given them the okay to go ahead and do that.

I wonder if the member could reflect on that and perhaps other things he has seen in the House based on the approach the Liberals have been using.

Mr. Glen Motz: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate my colleague's question. It was something I was going to raise during my commentary about how this can play out in other pieces of legislation. I thought of Bill C-76 as an example, and I failed to mention it. I thank my colleague for bringing it up.

One of the things that certainly could happen in circumstances like that, when departments, in this case Elections Canada, start to make changes to election rules that have not yet passed through the House, is that it leaves the impression among Canadians and among members in the House that we do not serve a purpose and that there is no need for democracy.

When the government has a majority and proposes a piece of legislation like Bill C-76, which is clearly slanted in a certain direction in favour of the current government, it impacts Canadians' ability to have a say in democracy and therefore causes democracy and members to be in disrepute. That is something we have to be above.

I certainly hope that the ruling made today by the Speaker will send a clear message, across all lines, across all ministries, and across all departments that until royal assent is given, there should be no presumptive action, no presumption, period, that any legislation is law until it is enacted.

● (1635)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Matthew Dubé (Beloeil—Chambly, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I have some comments I would like to make on the Speaker's ruling and on the motion that seeks to refer the matter to the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs.

First, I thank my colleague from Medicine Hat—Cardston—Warner, with whom I have the pleasure of working at the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security, for bringing this information to the attention of the House. I also thank the Chair for the ruling that was made.

I would like to dwell on the speaker's comments because I believe that there is something worrisome, if not arrogant, about correcting a situation after the fact and claiming it is no big deal as the matter is swept under the rug. There is indeed cause for the committee to investigate further.

I would add that the government's general attitude seems to be going down the wrong path. As the speaker pointed out, there is an accountability problem within the RCMP with regard to the executive and the government. I am not criticizing the men and women in uniform who protect us. These issues come from higher up.

This morning, we debated another time allocation motion for Bill C-71. The first one was tabled at the beginning of second reading. This contempt of Parliament shows that a certain arrogance is setting in, which is problematic as it can undermine the work of parliamentarians, who want to have healthy debates on very complex matters.

It goes without saying that we support the motion to have the matter referred to the committee, who will hopefully shed light on it. I heard a member across the way saying it was an honest mistake and that they corrected the situation, but as the Chair said so well, it is not the first time it happens. Obviously, the executive and all the departments it is responsible for, including the RCMP, will have to make every effort to avoid situations like this in the future. After all, citizens use these sources of information to learn about their obligations under the law. As members of Parliament, we also have a responsibility to inform citizens. When these sources of information and legislators contradict each other, it can be a problem.

Finally, I simply want to say again that we are in favour of the motion and that we are all very concerned about what happened. We thank the Speaker since there is indeed contempt of Parliament in this case. We hope that this trend does not continue, as it did with Bill C-76, an act to amend the Canada Elections Act.

[*English*]

The Deputy Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

Some hon. members: Question.

The Deputy Speaker: The question is on the motion. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

(Motion agreed to)

The Deputy Speaker: It is my duty pursuant to Standing Order 38 to inform the House that the questions to be raised tonight at the time of adjournment are as follows: the hon. member for Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, Employment.

* * *

● (1640)

FIREARMS ACT

The House resumed from June 18 consideration of Bill C-71, An Act to amend certain Acts and Regulations in relation to firearms, as reported (with amendments) from the committee, and of the motions in Group No. 1.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to rise and talk about what I believe is very important legislation. It is legislation that comes from a great deal of concern that Canadians have expressed to the government in the last year, and it is an issue that has been at the forefront in many communities in all regions of the country even before the last national election.

We saw a commitment given by the Liberal Party of Canada to look at ways to enhance background checks, for example, to have some sort of accurate and consistent classification. Legislation that was brought in from the Harper government said that we wanted to determine what would be a prohibited or restricted weapon and give that determination to politicians, as opposed to allowing the RCMP to make that determination. That is the direction the Harper government had taken on that issue.

As a result of that and other concerns, it was widely believed there was a need to bring in legislation that would make our communities safer. That is what we are talking about today in the form of Bill C-71. I have been following the debate and listening to what members across the way are saying, in particular last night when at times we were having a fairly heated exchange. Conservatives often refer to Bill C-71 as a way in which the government is trying to create a registry. There is really no truth to that whatsoever.

The Conservatives are trying to go back to the days when there was a long-gun registry and our Prime Minister has been very clear on that point. In part, the Conservatives have felt frustrated because we are keeping to the word of the Prime Minister when he said we would not be creating a long-gun registry.

No matter what we say in the House, we have had direct quotes from the Minister of Public Safety and others indicating that this does not create a registry. When the bill went to committee, the issue again came up. It was quite telling when the Conservative critic for public safety proposed an amendment to ensure, "For greater certainty, nothing in this Act shall be construed so as to permit or require the registration of non-restricted firearms."

Speaker's Ruling

The Conservative Party brought forward this amendment. That amendment passed unanimously, by all members of Parliament at the committee, the Liberals, Conservatives, and New Democrats. It ultimately led the member for Red Deer—Lacombe to clearly state, "everybody at this table agrees that this is not a registry".

Let us contrast that to what members in the Conservative Party were saying last night in the House. They were trying to convey a message that this is all about a registry. Collectively, the Conservative Party is trying to mislead Canadians as to what the bill is about. They are doing it for all the wrong reasons.

● (1645)

The Conservatives want to divide Canadians and spread a mistruth about good legislation we have, legislation I believe the vast majority of Canadians would be very supportive of.

I would suggest Progressive Conservatives would be supportive of it. I understand former member of Parliament Jason Kenney, now leader of the Conservative Party in Alberta, supports certain aspects of the legislation, from some of the comments he has made. For example, I made reference to the enhanced background checks and licence verifications. There are certain situations in society where one should seriously consider not allowing ownership. Domestic violence is a great example of that. This legislation would enhance that aspect. That is a positive thing. I believe people of all political parties recognize the value of that.

It would also standardize the retail record-keeping. During the eighties and the first few years of the nineties, there was a registry maintained by retailers. It is my understanding that in the United States it has been ongoing for years. I was once told that the NRA, which many suggest is fairly right on the issues of anything related to guns, supports retail gun registries. I believe we will find many of the retail outlets are gifted these logs. They are encouraged. I see going back to the way it was, having these retail registries, as a positive thing. In the past, Conservatives have agreed to them.

Getting back now to this whole idea of the accurate and consistent classifications of firearms, if we were to canvass constituents on whether politicians or the RCMP should be doing the classification, I believe we would find a great deal of support for having the RCMP doing it. They would feel much safer with the idea of the RCMP doing it. The RCMP is dealing with the issue at the ground level.

When I think of Bill C-71, it is about making our communities safer. It is not about what the Conservatives are trying to tell Canadians it is all about, which is a gun registry, because that is just not true. In the backrooms, we will find Conservatives will admit that is not true, but it does not fit their narrative. I find that to be very unfortunate. When I am in the community of Winnipeg North, I see many of the concerns many urban and rural community members have, as well as the types of responses we have been getting to the legislation overall. I would suggest this is good, sound legislation, and the Conservatives are determined to prevent it from passing. I find that unfortunate.

Speaker's Ruling

I understand my New Democratic friends, and possibly the Green Party, are going to be supporting Bill C-71. If that is the case, I applaud them on making a good decision. At the end of the day, this legislation would fulfill yet another commitment the Liberal Party of Canada made to Canadians going into the last federal election. That is why I feel very good about standing and talking about yet another piece of legislation that would put into place a commitment made by this Prime Minister and my colleagues in the Liberal caucus when we knocked on doors in the last election.

● (1650)

It will make a positive difference in our communities in all regions of our country. I encourage Conservatives to reflect on what was said in committee by Conservatives, get behind this legislation and vote for it.

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to assure the parliamentary secretary so quickly after his speech that indeed I plan to vote for Bill C-71. The Green Party is very supportive. In fact, I had the great honour of participating in the crafting of an amendment to the bill, working with the hon. member for Burlington. She was willing to take a Liberal amendment and craft-in my amendment, which included raising as a concern, as decisions were being made about legal gun ownership, whether there was not only a previous offence involving a firearm, but a restraining order or other concerns about violence against an intimate partner or use of a weapon in those contexts.

This bill is welcomed. There are many things we need to do to continue to advance security issues across Canada. However, this is a good bill, and I look forward to voting for it.

[*Translation*]

My remarks fall under "comments".

[*English*]

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the input of the leader of the Green Party on the legislation. Obviously, we agree with her and we are pleased to hear the Green Party is in support. Her comments remind me of the degree to which the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness reached out and looked for opinions from different stakeholders and, most important, from Canadians in different regions of our country. He has put together good, sound legislation.

The leader made a reference to restraining orders or peace bonds that are put in place. They are put in place because often there is a fear factor that compels a person to get a restraining order. Imagine the potential relief that this would provide, at least in part. As I say, it is positive legislation that will have a positive impact.

Mr. David Sweet (Flamborough—Glanbrook, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the parliamentary secretary implied that retailers do not keep records of firearms they sell. That is categorically wrong. All the retailers I know of keep those records, and so that is a misnomer in and of itself.

This legislation would not combat the number one problem we have as far as crimes and firearms are concerned, and that is illegal firearms. It is illegal guns that are smuggled in, primarily from the United States. There is no mention of that whatsoever. In fact, this is what I would call lackadaisical legislation in the sense that farmers, sports shooters, and competitive shooters are the most law-abiding people I know. This is simply laying over more red tape on top of people who are already obeying the laws. Could the parliamentary secretary explain how that would substantially reduce firearms violence in Canada?

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, it was not my intention to give the impression that retailers did not already maintain some sort of a registry. This legislation puts it into place in a very formal way, as it was done in the late 1980s to early 1990s. Former Conservatives actually supported that.

The member asked what the legislation would do in regard to illegal guns. Do the Conservatives think we can pass legislation that would make it illegal to have an illegal gun?

The member talked about the legislation. Now it appears that the only opposition to the legislation is that it does not deal with illegal gun owners and possible regulations. The member did make reference to regulations also. I do not believe the Conservative Party truly understands what the legislation would do. It is good, sound legislation that would have a positive impact. There is nothing wrong with voting in favour of it.

Does it deal with illegal guns in the manner in which the Conservatives hoped it would? It likely does not. If the Conservatives can come up with a way that would assist the government in legislation of that nature, by all means they can make the suggestion.

● (1655)

Mr. David Sweet (Flamborough—Glanbrook, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is an honour to rise in the House today to speak to Bill C-71, an act to amend certain acts and regulations in relation to firearms.

I have been a member of this place for nearly 13 years. I am proud that over that time I have played a part in legislation that ensures Parliament is reaching three important objectives: first, that laws are put in place to protect the public from violent crime; second, that we are standing up for victims of crime and their families; and third, that law-abiding Canadians are treated with respect.

In this case, Bill C-71 misses the mark on all three of these objectives.

I recognize, and indeed our previous Conservative government recognized, how important it is to ensure that violent offenders and those who intend on using weapons to commit crimes are taken off the streets. I am certainly an advocate for legislation that targets dangerous offenders, protects our public, and ensures justice for victims and their families. I am proud that over my time here, I have been able to do my part to do just that.

In 2013, I introduced Bill C-479, an act to bring fairness for the victims of violent offenders. This legislation, which received all-party support, made certain that violent offenders who were clearly not remorseful or ready to be reintegrated into society could not drag their victims and their families before the Parole Board every year needlessly.

Indeed, any laws that aim to tackle violent crime must also seek to protect victims of violent offenders and their families from being re-victimized. They must also ensure that these offenders, those that are among the most likely to reoffend, do not get that opportunity.

By introducing legislation such as the Common Sense Firearms Licensing Act, the Safe Streets and Communities Act, and the Tackling Violent Crime Act, among many others, our Conservative government implemented productive, common-sense policies that treated firearms owners in the manner that any law-abiding citizen should be treated, while also cracking down on violent offenders and protecting the rights of victims.

The Common Sense Firearms Licensing Act took the power to reclassify firearms out of the hands of the RCMP and officials and put it in the hands of parliamentarians, who could be held accountable by the public. In doing so, our government sought to prevent any law-abiding citizen from being criminalized due to an unsubstantiated classification change.

The Tackling Violent Crime Act mandated jail time for serious gun crimes and made bail provisions stricter for those who had been accused of such crimes.

The Organized Crime and Protection of Justice System Participants Act provided police and justices with crucial new tools to fight against organized crime and to target reckless shootings by adding a new offence for the use of a firearm in the commission of a crime, regardless of whether the person caused or meant to cause bodily harm.

Of course, who could forget that we repealed the wasteful and ineffective long gun registry, which did absolutely nothing to reduce crime, but did waste millions in taxpayer dollars to treat law-abiding Canadians like criminals. In fact, I would challenge my Liberal colleagues to show me any data that would prove that there has been any increase in firearms crimes from legal firearms owners since the firearms registry was eliminated.

These are just a very small sample of the measures our previous Conservative government took to protect our communities and keep Canadians safe.

It is a shame now that the current Liberal government is trying to undo the progress we made. We have seen over the past two and a half years that the government cannot be trusted when it comes to protecting the public, while also protecting the rights of farmers and recreational and competitive firearms owners.

Bill C-71 proposes a myriad of changes that would potentially criminalize law-abiding Canadians, while doing nothing to target violent offenders or organized crime. The bill would put firearms classification powers back in the hands of unelected officials who Canadians cannot hold accountable, and risks unsubstantiated changes that would indeed create legal problems for people who have done nothing wrong. For my colleagues across the way, we experienced that in the last session when changes were made. Some members of Parliament who possessed firearms were criminalized by the changes.

What is worse is that the Liberals are pretending they are not trying to bring back the long-gun registry, which is nothing less than misleading. This bill would create a registrar to keep track of transfers of non-restricted firearms, yet the government insists it is not bringing back the long-gun registry.

● (1700)

I took the liberty of doing a quick Google search for the word "registrar", and right at the top of the page was a definition that read, "an official responsible for keeping a register or official records." That certainly sounds like a long-gun registry to me, and it sounds equally as wasteful and ineffective as the last one.

Originally, our caucus was optimistic about the government's intentions when it accepted our amendment at committee, which stated, "For greater certainty, nothing in this Act shall be construed so as to permit or require the registration of non-restricted firearms." However, much to our surprise, it rejected our additional amendments that would have ensured that the elements of Bill C-71 to bring in this new long-gun registry were taken out of the bill. The government can say that it is not bringing back the long-gun registry, and I have heard it say that many times, but that does not make it true.

Meanwhile, Bill C-75, the government's legislation that proposes to overhaul the Criminal Code, would reduce penalties for very serious crimes, in some cases down to simple fines. The penalties for crimes like participating in the activities of a terrorist group, advocating genocide, and participating in organized criminal activity are being reduced in one piece of legislation, while farmers are being potentially criminalized in another. That is absolutely shameful.

The riding I represent, Flamborough—Glanbrook, is home to many farmers, hunters and sport shooters. These are people who are legally and safely using their firearms to protect their livestock and their crops, and who are participating in recreational pastimes that are ingrained in our national heritage.

I have heard from a wide variety of firearms owners in my riding who are deeply concerned that the government is targeting them through this bill, while completely neglecting to address rising crime rates in rural communities across the country which are particularly derived from illegal imported firearms.

I personally enjoy going down to the range for recreational purposes, and I completely understand the concerns of my constituents. They are concerned that they could be randomly criminalized by bureaucrats who they would be wholly unable to hold to account. They are concerned that the government is increasing red tape and treating them like criminals when they have done absolutely nothing wrong.

As has already been pointed out by our Conservative caucus several times throughout debate on this bill, this new long-gun registry that the Liberals are bringing in through the back door is treating law-abiding Canadians like suspects, and that is just not right.

Speaker's Ruling

The tandem of Bill C-71 and Bill C-75 is symbolic of much of the last two and a half years, where the government has been terribly ineffective on numerous files. The Liberals introduced these two pieces of legislation with the notion that they wished to tackle gun violence. However, they are doing nothing of the sort. What these bills would do is potentially criminalize law-abiding farmers, hunters, and sport shooters, and reduce the penalties for very serious and violent crimes. What they would not do is make our communities safer.

Canadians want to feel safe in their communities and their homes. They want a government that ensures that those who pose a threat to them and their families are taken off the streets. Bill C-71, and Bill C-75 for that matter, would do nothing of the sort.

This legislation is not only deeply flawed, but wasteful, and quite frankly offensive to the thousands of law-abiding Canadians who it will affect. Our Conservative caucus is determined to ensure that the laws we produce in this place protect our communities and respect the rights of law-abiding Canadians. Anything less is not good enough.

Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, unfortunately I disagree with the member and his comments. If we look at this bill objectively, we see it is a bill that does an extremely good job of protecting the rights of lawful gun owners for the recreational and sporting purposes. However, at the same time, it moves to strengthen the laws that we do have around gun legislation.

I know the member talked quite a bit about this being a form of a registry. He said that this was just a way of it coming in through the back door. I know that has been an ongoing Conservative talking point since this debate has come back to the chamber. However, the situation is this. If members heard what the minister said this morning, he commented directly that the Conservative members on the committee admitted the fact that this was not a gun registry. He even went beyond that. He read out a motion put forward by a Conservative member, specifically identifying that this was not to be construed as a registry, which would be the fact for anybody who would be implementing this law.

Does the member disagree that the Conservative members of that committee did their due diligence? With respect to the ones who we would think would be inclined to know something about what was going on because they studied the legislation, does he disagree that they did not know what they were doing when they put forward that amendment?

● (1705)

Mr. David Sweet: Mr. Speaker, I am glad to answer my colleague from Kingston, which is my hometown. It is a nice place. Too bad it is represented by a Liberal.

The fact that the word "registrar" is in the bill indicates, as I mentioned, that there must be something that the registrar is responsible for, and that must be a registry.

To do a bait and switch like the member is suggesting, in order words, to accept one of the amendments that my colleague suggested but dismiss four of the others to assure that there was not any registry, is exactly the case that we are talking about here.

Earlier today, the public safety minister mentioned a guns and gangs summit that happened here in Ottawa. I do not see anything that would be a product of that summit that happened here enshrined in the bill. I do not see anything giving resources to law enforcement. I do not see anything providing new regulations in order for them to investigate the importation of illegal guns.

As the parliamentary secretary mentioned earlier, we cannot possibly make something illegal that is already illegal. Well, we can certainly draft legislation that would help with enforcement of the importation of illegal firearms.

Mr. David Anderson (Cypress Hills—Grasslands, CPC): Mr. Speaker, there are two things I want to ask my colleague.

When we come to buy a firearm under this new legislation, we will have to register the sale. We will have to register the firearm itself. The person who is buying it will need to register. The shop that is selling it will need to register as part of the transaction. The PAL number will need to be registered. Then the information will need to be kept for 20 years. Does the member not see that this is the establishment of a registry?

The second part of my question has to do with the fact that the Liberals are saying that this information will not be available to anyone without a warrant, except section 102 of the Firearms Act already allows a firearms officer to review, seize, or copy any records kept as a requirement of a business licence without a warrant.

I would ask my colleague if he has some concerns about the fact that one part of the act says that they do not need a warrant, and yet the Liberals are misleading Canadians into believing that this information that is being held in gun stores is going to be private, unless there is a warrant involved to access that information.

Mr. David Sweet: Mr. Speaker, of course, I have a profound amount of concern in regard to everything the member said, not the least of which is this is simply another layer of red tape that is going to be another cost to taxpayers. It is information that is already available. I have already mentioned, and the parliamentary secretary agreed, that retailers already now make sure that every sale is recorded in their own store. A law enforcement officer can go into those stores and check it. This is simply another way to add red tape and make it more difficult for the average Canadian to comply with these laws.

I would also like to point out that the other thing the bill does not address are victims of violent crime. Concern for victims by the Liberal Party has been totally absent in this session. In fact, the victim ombudsman's office has been vacant for months, and the Liberals have not even had the courtesy to make sure there is a victim ombudsperson there to deal with the concerns of families who have been victimized in Canada.

● (1710)

Hon. K. Kellie Leitch (Simcoe—Grey, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to speak this afternoon on behalf of law-abiding gun owners in Simcoe—Grey, like me and those across the country who feel that Bill C-71 is an intrusive piece of legislation designed as a backdoor entry for the revival of the Liberal long-gun registry.

I am not sure why this needs to be said yet again, but when it comes to gun crime, criminals do not care about a registry, background checks, or any other piece of legislation the Liberals bring forward. Criminals are criminals, because they break the law. They are not signing up for a background check or registering their guns. They will not be calling in for a reference number when they try to buy or sell an illegal firearm. They are criminals. They do not believe that they need to abide by this law or, quite frankly, any other.

The Liberals can introduce all the legislation they want, including Bill C-71, but it will have little effect on the very matter it attempts to address. All the legislation in the world is not going to stop a gang member in downtown Toronto from pulling an illegal handgun out of his pocket and shooting someone in cold blood.

Now, support for front-line policing can help decrease the crime rate, but this legislation will not. One would think that the Minister of Public Safety would understand this. If he does indeed understand this, then why is he only blindly following the orders of the Prime Minister's Office? Perhaps like his more urban colleagues he actually does not understand the situation and thinks that cracking down on farmers and hunters, people like my grandfather and my neighbours in Creemore, will actually help lower crime rates in our cities.

I know that he has produced a slew of statistics designed to instill fear in Canadians because of rising gun homicide rates in major Canadian cities. The Liberals seem to be very concerned with increasing criminal possession of firearms. This is something we should all be concerned about, yet the Liberals have neglected any investment in technologies or services to intercept illegal firearms passing across the border from the United States or other countries into Canada. Who could trust a government that cannot even stop people from illegally walking into our country, to be able to stop people bringing in illegal hand guns or smuggling guns?

Earlier this year, the Minister of Public Safety touched on the insufficient commercial storage of firearms. He used the example of a theft in Prince Albert, Saskatchewan, which led to 24 handguns being stolen from a local gun store by a suspected gang member. What he failed to describe, though, was any effective legislation that would prevent this act from happening again.

Backdoor gun registries do not prevent theft and illegal trade. Sound legislation that is enforced, along with front-line support for local law enforcement can. Sadly, the Liberals have continued to fail to provide adequate funding to the provinces to support efforts to combat illegal gun activity, exactly as the minister himself has lamented.

This legislation, as I mentioned, is a blatant backdoor attempt at reintroducing the intrusive long-gun registry. Through this bill, criminal suspicion of law-abiding firearm owners will just ramp up once again. Bill C-71 is legislation designed to criminalize law-abiding gun owners and compromise the integrity of an already well-functioning system.

The mandatory record-keeping by retailers will simply lead to the re-establishment of the long-gun registry by another name. Instead of a list, the government will just ask for a series of receipts. A database is still a database, and can and will be traced to the original purchase, so let us not be surprised when those receipts become a list, and law-abiding gun owners find themselves on it.

In addition, the long-gun registry was criticized by Canadians for its considerably large cost, and the level of suspicion incited on gun owners. An increase in the size of government bureaucracy and red tape, a well-known Liberal trait, will accompany this legislation as well.

For many Canadians, rural and urban, firearms ownership is of great cultural significance. For some, it is multi-generational, with grandfathers passing on their love of hunting to fathers, who pass it on to their sons and, increasingly, to their daughters. For many others, shooting is a hobby, an afternoon at the range with friends on a weekend.

● (1715)

However, the public safety minister and the Liberals like to distort statistics to instill fear in Canadians as a reason to take actions like this. The minister's friends in the media will use headlines littered with firearm homicides, particularly from the United States, in order to feed that fear. Unfortunately, this legislation would not address the source of the problem at hand: gang violence and organized criminal activity. Those conducting the majority of homicides, gangs, and those who facilitate organized crime would continue to slip through the cracks with this legislation,.That is the very matter that needs to be addressed.

Canadians already feel safe with the current gun control laws. The RCMP knows those who have been issued licences and the strict process that has to be followed to receive them. We have in place today sensible legislation and regulations that are appropriately followed and actively monitored by highly trained members of the RCMP. We can all agree that increasing gang violence is a grave concern and a tremendous burden on those who have witnessed or have been involved in tragic events. We all want to prevent the next tragedy conducted by a person using an illegal firearm. However, the Liberals are focused on the wrong place and on the wrong people.

Increased gun control has not prevented organized crime in the past. Likewise, this legislation would not be a step forward in combatting that crime, only a step into the freedoms of law-abiding citizens.

Speaker's Ruling

The safety of Canadians should be the number one priority of any government. Legislation like this would not protect Canadians from violent crimes. What it would do is continue to perpetuate the sense that law-abiding gun owners, like farmers, duck hunters, my constituents, those who follow all the rules and laws, are the problem when we really need to support front-line policing to tackle gangs and organized crime.

I will be voting against this legislation in support of my law-abiding constituents, the men and women in Simcoe—Grey, many of whom own guns and utilize them on their farms, hunt, and spend time at the range with their friends. I encourage all Liberal MPs to support their law-abiding gun owners as well and to vote against this legislation.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am wondering if the member can explain to those who are interested and are following the debate why the Conservative critic, when this bill was at committee, after moving an amendment, stated very clearly, "Everybody at this table agrees that this is not a registry." That was after an amendment was moved by the Conservative Party which states:

> For greater certainty, nothing in this Act shall be construed so as to permit or require the registration of non-restricted firearms."

It is very clear from the Conservative critic and Conservative members at committee that this has nothing to do with a gun registry, and yet Conservatives in the House, when the cameras are on, try to make a point that this is all about a registry.

Hon. K. Kellie Leitch: Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the member opposite. There are a number of law-abiding gun owners in Nunavut, the Northwest Territories, Yukon. Why are the members who represent those ridings not speaking out on behalf of their constituents, as I am for mine? There are law-abiding gun owners in my constituency, individuals who follow the rules and the law. I am wondering why they should find themselves as part of a list that, as I said in my speech, is going to become a registry, one that puts those people in a position where they should not be questioned, but the Liberals want to question them every single time, about their gun possession.

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, I find it lamentable that the last speaker has politicized this by saying the Liberals want to bother legal gun owners at every possible opportunity. On an issue as important as ensuring, for instance, that lifetime background checks are conducted, a lot of legal gun owners in my riding absolutely agree that somebody who has had significant issues of violence in their lives should be reviewed with more than a five-year background check. It should be lifetime. I do not think it is appropriate to try to stir up partisan vitriol on an issue as important as making sure that Canadians are safe, not from legal gun owners who are responsible hunters or who use their guns for target practice or for sport in a responsible way. We know people get killed by their intimate partners and there are warning signs, and this bill would increase the extent to which those warning signs will be flagged.

● (1720)

Hon. K. Kellie Leitch: Mr. Speaker, I mentioned this in my speech previously, and my constituents in Simcoe—Grey raise this continually. They feel safe. We have current gun control laws. The RCMP know who has been issued a licence for strict possession, and people have gone through the process of receiving their licences. We know who these people are already, and Canadians know that we have sensible gun registration regulations already.

What I think we are concerned about, and my constituents are concerned about, is when a receipt ends up on a list, and that list becomes a registry. All of a sudden, those law-abiding citizens do not feel like they are being treated like law-abiding citizens any longer.

Mr. David Anderson (Cypress Hills—Grasslands, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I find it interesting. We have Bill C-71 here. We have a good firearms registry in this country, because people who want to participate in firearms activities have to be licensed and get the proper certification. This bill just adds more bureaucracy. It is more of a process. It creates more difficulty for legitimate people to actually be involved in these kinds of hobbies.

I would like to have my colleague just comment on the difference between this bill, which reflects the attitude of the government on Bill C-71 and the fact that it is clamping down on legitimate, honest people across this country, and Bill C-75, which reduces the sentences for things like terrorism, genocide, criminal activity, organized municipal corruption, and those kinds of things.

Could she reflect on that a bit?

Hon. K. Kellie Leitch: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague for his outstanding work in this House, especially on these issues that involve public safety. Like him, I find it shocking and surprising that within the same week we are talking about two bills that deal with public safety concerns, and the Liberals seem to be on both sides of the answer to this question.

What is it? Is it that we actually are here to make sure Canadians are safe, or is it that we want to have such open, liberal access to things that we put Canadians at risk?

I do not think the government knows, and that is why we see these pieces of legislation that are not clear to Canadians about making sure they are safe on Canadian soil.

The Deputy Speaker: Before we to go the hon. member for Prince George—Peace River—Northern Rockies, I will let him know that there will only be about six minutes remaining before we need to interrupt for private members' business. He will get his remaining time, of course, when the House gets back to the motion that is currently before it.

Resuming debate, the hon. member for Prince George—Peace River—Northern Rockies.

Mr. Bob Zimmer (Prince George—Peace River—Northern Rockies, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we saw different iterations of the firearms registry come before our Conservative government, and one of the mandates we had was to get rid of the registry. We did so with the exception of two copies, as we are told by the Information Commissioner. It was preserved for a person named Bill Clennett, who had made an ATIP request because he wanted to preserve that part of the data.

It seems more than strange in reference to my colleagues' comments about it not being a registry, not a backdoor registry, not a front door registry, etc.

I beg to differ, and I will quote from Bill C-71 itself. Many folks are watching this debate, especially law-abiding firearms owners who are concerned about this bill and how far it goes, and I am going to let them decide.

This is what I call the front door registry, the one that is not supposed to exist. The minister has said the government is not going to re-establish the registry. I even looked at the talking points of the Liberal Party. I looked at my phone, and the Liberals say on Twitter, "No new gun registry".

The bill states:

> The Commissioner of Firearms shall—for the purpose of the administration and enforcement of the Firearms Registration Act, chapter 15 of the Statutes of Quebec, 2016—provide the Quebec Minister with a copy of all records that were in the Canadian Firearms Registry on April 3, 2015 and that relate to firearms registered, as at that day, as non-restricted firearms, if the Quebec Minister provides the Commissioner with a written request to that effect before the end of the 120th day after the day on which the Commissioner sends written notice under subsection (2).

That is not legislation from two years ago. This is from Bill C-71, the legislation we are debating on the floor of the House right now. It seems more than strange that the minister can stand and say what we are saying is false, that we are calling what they are proposing a new firearms registry.

I will read it again, for those who did not hear:

> for the purpose of the administration and enforcement of the Firearms Registration Act, chapter 15 of the Statutes of Quebec, 2016—provide the Quebec Minister with a copy of all records that were in the Canadian Firearms Registry

—that is giving the hard drive to the Quebec minister if they ask for it—

> on April 3, 2015 and that relate to firearms registered, as at that day, as non-restricted firearms

I am a person who owns handguns, so I am a restricted firearms owner. We are already on a registry in the database for that purpose alone. Prohibited firearms owners are there as well, but the government says it is not creating a new non-restricted firearms registry.

I said it twice, but the Liberal members here do not seem too interested in the facts of their own bill, which are that the minister is going to pass a copy of the registry that was supposed to have been destroyed with the previous government to the Province of Quebec to re-establish a firearms registry.

I do not know how much clearer we can be. What are they going to do when they have a former firearms registry that is now three years old? They are going to update that firearms registry data.

Let us say the Quebec minister makes a request for this firearms registry of the data that was supposed to have been destroyed, and brings it into the province. This is speculation, of course, but we need not look too far to see what is going to happen. The Quebec government takes its copy and then chooses to update it. Here we go again. We have a firearms registry that is going to happen in Quebec as a result of this legislation.

Speaker's Ruling

The troubling part of this is that the Information Commissioner preserved a copy because of the request by one individual named Bill Clennett. That is the only reason this copy has been preserved. I am told there are two copies of this. The only reason it sits in a vault to this day is to honour a request by that individual. For no other purpose does it exist.

● (1725)

Therefore, for the minister now to offer a copy of that to the Quebec government goes against a Supreme Court ruling saying that the jurisdiction lies within this place and in the federal government.

It also strikes me as strange that a previous government's mandate was to destroy the registry. It made attempts to do that. Because of a request, it has been preserved. It is clear this registry's data as they sit, the two copies that exist in this vault, need to be destroyed once this requirement is met. To me, this is an obvious case of establishing a firearms registry through the front door. When I come back, I will also speak about the registry as it sits, as they try to get it through the back door.

The Deputy Speaker: When the House next gets back to the question, the hon. member for Prince George—Peace River—Northern Rockies will have four minutes remaining for his remarks, and of course the usual period for questions and comments.

[*Translation*]

It being 5:30 p.m., the House will now proceed to the consideration of private members' business as listed on today's Order Paper.

* * *

● (1730)

AERONAUTICS ACT

Ms. Monique Pauzé (Repentigny, QD) moved that Bill C-392, An Act to amend the Aeronautics Act, the Fishing and Recreational Harbours Act and other Acts (application of provincial law), be read the second time and referred to the Standing Committee on Transport, Infrastructure and Communities.

She said: Mr. Speaker, I am very proud to rise in the House today. Being able to introduce a bill and debate it is a significant moment for a legislator. Bill C-392 will give me a sense of accomplishment, and members will soon see why.

This bill will ensure that no one will be above our laws. It will help ensure better protection for our environment and farmlands, and it will allow for much more harmonious land use and development. Bill C-392 amends eight federal acts to impose constraints on the ministers responsible for enforcing these acts. This bill deals with legislation regulating pipelines, harbours, docks, airports, telecommunications infrastructure, and all property that enjoys federal immunity, including land managed by the National Capital Commission.

Once this bill is passed, the federal government will no longer be able to authorize an activity or infrastructure project that would violate provincial laws or municipal bylaws on environmental protection and land development. In theory, Quebec belongs to Quebeckers. For the most part, the protection of our territory and environment is governed by Quebec law.

Moreover, Quebec is a pioneer in this area. It has had environmental legislation on the books for almost half a century. It may not be perfect, but it is the best in North America. The same applies to land development. There is a series of laws and regulations to ensure that it is as harmonious as possible at both the provincial and municipal levels.

To ensure Quebeckers' needs are taken into account, there is a series of consultation mechanisms, for example the Bureau d'audiences publiques sur l'environnement, and municipal referendums. In short, we have adopted a series of laws and mechanisms to protect our environment, ensure harmonious land development and guarantee that projects have social licence. The same is true of every province.

However, when it comes to projects under federal jurisdiction, none of this applies. For all intents and purposes, the federal government is above provincial law. Quebec laws and municipal by-laws continue to apply, but only insofar as they do not affect activities under federal jurisdiction.

Consider a hypothetical pipeline project. We might demand that the pipe be painted green, blue, black or yellow. That does not cost much or bother anyone. However, we could not impose major constraints or demand costly detours, much less refuse to give our consent for the project. Only the federal government can make these decisions, despite our laws and regardless of the will of my people.

Since I was elected about two years ago, there have been too many federal projects that have caused discontent because we have no say in their implementation. It is as if we were no longer at home at home.

Here are some examples: consider the Act Respecting the Preservation of Agricultural Land and Agricultural Activities, which is celebrating its 40th anniversary this year. We tend to forget, because Quebec has a huge territory, but our farmland is extremely valuable. Only 2% of Quebec's total land mass is made up of good farmland. When it is contaminated and paved over, it is lost forever. It is lost to posterity.

For 40 years now, developers in Quebec have been prevented from destroying our farmland. They must appear before the Commission de protection du territoire agricole and obtain authorization before building anything in a green zone.

However, in 2010, the Supreme Court ruled that the act did not apply to the construction of aerodromes on protected farmland. Since aeronautics is under federal jurisdiction, these contractors are above provincial law. As a result, since the last election, an airport was built in an agricultural area in Saint-Cuthbert, in the riding of Berthier—Maskinongé. There is another one in Neuville, an aerodrome built smack dab in the middle of a cornfield in the riding of Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier. In both cases, the construction violated provincial law, the Union des producteurs agricoles protested, the municipalities protested, and the Quebec government and the National Assembly protested. No one wanted them, but the federal government gave the go-ahead anyway.

● (1735)

The same thing happened in Mascouche, in my esteemed colleague's riding of Montcalm. In the case of Mascouche, the bill breaches three laws; not one or two laws, but three laws. It breaches agricultural zoning provisions, municipal zoning provisions and the Canadian Environmental Protection Act, because it is in a protected wooded area. My colleague from Montcalm spoke many times in the House on the issue, but that did not matter to the government. It blindly authorized the construction, and the whole thing is now before the courts.

Let us look at other examples. In the case of land development, municipalities are on the front lines. Developing a territory home to thousands of people and sharing it harmoniously in order to avoid conflict is a delicate affair. That is what city planning and zoning regulations are for. Land use planning can only be done at the local level by people who live in the territory in question. After all, it is their territory, their home. Of course, the federal government does not care. It grants businesses under its jurisdiction the same immunity it enjoys from our laws.

I am convinced that every member in the House could tell stories about problems with cell towers being built wherever telecommunications companies please. These companies are above provincial law, above the will of the people, and they certainly are not afraid to take advantage of it. Some cities have tried to pass by-laws to try to straighten things out, but the courts have struck them down one after the other. That is what happened in Terrebonne, Châteauguay and Gatineau. Montreal withdrew its own by-law because, during public consultations, the companies even threatened to sue the city. Industry Canada sent a brief to tell the city to back down.

I could mention the Port of Quebec. IMTT set up shop there, polluting the Limoilou and Saint-Roch neighbourhoods, in the ridings of Beauport—Limoilou and Québec. Residents began mobilizing because of the red dust that settled on their balconies, window sills and outdoor play areas. Among other things, the dust contained nickel, iron, copper and zinc. Did the federal government listen to them? Not at all, because Ottawa is far removed from the real world. At the end of the day, the Quebec government intervened, but it was met with arrogance from the federal government and the businesses it protects under the mantle of its power.

When inspectors from the Quebec ministry for sustainable development, the environment, and the fight against climate change wanted to visit the facilities, the port authorities told them that they had no business there, because the port is under federal jurisdiction. When the Quebec government served a statement of offence under its Environment Quality Act, the company sent it packing. The worst part is that the Quebec Superior Court ruled in favour of the company. The company can flout our laws and poison our urban neighbourhoods as much as it wants. It is above the law.

I have not even mentioned the energy east pipeline, that would have crossed 800 waterways in Quebec without our being able to do a thing about it. These 800 waterways are a source of drinking water for five million Quebeckers. TransCanada consistently refused to apply for a Quebec certificate of authorization, submit to BAPE hearings or comply with Quebec law. If the project had not been abandoned by the company, we would have seen monster protests, and I guarantee that I would have been among the protestors. There would also have been an endless legal battle between the Government of Quebec and the federal government, which systematically sides with companies against Canadians. The government should not be imposing projects on Canadians without their consent.

That is what is happening now in British Columbia, a taste of what will happen if the government tries to revive the energy east pipeline project. We need to settle this now, before it leads to a social and political crisis, which is precisely what will happen if the energy east pipeline project is revived.

I could talk about the federal government's properties. Cities develop plans, rule on the maximum height of buildings and make an effort to preserve green areas so that the city can breathe. That is what land development is all about.

● (1740)

However, Ottawa can barge in and build anything anywhere, with no regard for local residents or the bylaws adopted by local elected officials. For example, the City of Gatineau has often ended up at daggers drawn with the National Capital Commission. Recently, someone was telling me about the fact that the government constantly nibbles away at Ottawa's Greenbelt whenever it builds new federal offices. That is how things go with projects under federal jurisdiction. There is no shortage of problems, from disregard for locals and legal uncertainty to court battles and unenforceable municipal bylaws.

This bill will fix all of that by introducing legal certainty into areas under perpetual litigation. Since there will be an act of Parliament to explain why proponents' projects were turned down, they will no longer be able to challenge the applicability of our laws. True, the bill will take discretionary powers away from the government, but only to give them back to the people. Furthermore, this would fulfill one of the Liberals' campaign promises that they seem to have forgotten once they got a taste of power. I would just like to remind them that they said the following:

> While governments grant permits for resource development, only communities can grant permission.

Indeed, before the election, the Liberals promised that they would not issue permits for projects that were not approved by the province or municipality. That is precisely what the bill will force them to do. Given that projects will have to concurrently comply with federal laws, provincial laws, and municipal by-laws, the highest standard will apply. It is important to have fairly high standards for the environment.

We live in a democracy. Our laws, our regulations, and our consultation mechanisms reflect a certain social consensus. In principle, Quebec agrees with this bill. The Government of Quebec believes that its environmental and land use planning laws must apply at all times. The National Assembly has stated this unanimously several times.

Municipalities are very unhappy that Ottawa constantly circumvents them. The Union des producteurs agricoles wants Ottawa to comply with the law that protects Quebec land. Environmental groups want the highest standards to apply.

While the government insists on exercising its authority on all matters, we want to return control of the land to those who live there. That way we could to a greater extent be masters in our own house, as Jean Lesage used to say. That is Bill C-392 in a nutshell, and that is why I am very proud to introduce it today.

In closing, I would be remiss if I did not thank legislative counsel of the House, especially Nathalie Caron and Isabelle D'Souza, because preparing an omnibus bill that amends several laws and has almost constitutional impacts on a very tight deadline was quite the challenge and they rose to the occasion brilliantly. Hats off to them.

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate the hon. member from Repentigny on her private member's bill. I fully support the bill's objective.

As my colleague mentioned, it is unacceptable that the government is ignoring the will of British Columbians in the matter of the Kinder Morgan pipeline.

With Bill C-69, there will be no credible assessment process for projects such as pipelines at the federal level. We must protect the provinces' right to conduct more appropriate assessments, such as those conducted by the Bureau d'audiences publiques sur l'environnement.

What does my colleague think about this shortcoming in Bill C-69?

● (1745)

Ms. Monique Pauzé: Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague for her question.

Yes, I tried to propose the same type of amendments that would have ensured compliance with provincial laws and municipal by-laws. Unfortunately, the entire Standing Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development voted them down.

[*English*]

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, like Manitoba, I really do care about the province of Quebec. I care about the different regions of our country. My ancestors, both on my mother's and father's side, originated from the province of Quebec. I was an MLA for many years, almost two decades, in Manitoba. As much as I love my province, I understand that at times there needs to be a national interest in the potential for development of different projects. There also is is a need for a national government to demonstrate leadership. The former question is a good example of why it is necessary.

My question for my friend and colleague across the way is this. I can appreciate, as I am sure she knows, that she comes from a party that would ultimately like to see more separation of Quebec from Canada. To what degree might that be the primary motivation, as opposed to having legislation that is in the best interest of all Canadians, in the national interest?

[*Translation*]

Ms. Monique Pauzé: Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague for her question, as it is an opportunity for me to tell her that the bill covers the country from coast to coast. Moreover, my colleague from Saanich—Gulf Islands supports it. We did a press briefing together.

Also, what is the national interest? In my opinion, the national interest is making sure that people have drinking water. Our bodies are apparently made up of 60% water. In my opinion, drinking water is an essential service, and that is what we need to protect. The national interest is protecting public health.

In Limoilou, people are breathing in dust containing nickel, copper, iron, zinc and God knows what else. In my opinion, that is not in the national interest. If Canada's national interest means pipelines and oil and if that is more important than anything else, we are obviously not living in the same nation.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): We still have time for a brief question and answer. The hon. member from Trois-Rivières has the floor.

Mr. Robert Aubin (Trois-Rivières, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I will try to be brief. First, I would like to thank my colleague from Repentigny for her initiative, which reminds me that the aerodrome in Neuville was a contentious issue under the previous government and that my colleague Élaine Michaud did an extraordinary job at the time.

As the hon. member said herself, her bill is something of an omnibus bill, because it affects eight laws. Although I support the bill, I wonder whether the amendments she proposes are the same in all eight cases. For example, are we talking about incorporation by reference? By what legislative process does she intend to tackle the problem?

Ms. Monique Pauzé: Mr. Speaker, yes, the bill affects eight laws, but the same amendment applies to all of them. There are already laws in Canada that take provincial laws into account, such as the Canada National Parks Act. Bill C-392 takes elements from the Canada National Parks Act and applies them to all projects.

Mrs. Karen McCrimmon (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to speak today about Bill C-392.

Bill C-392 touches upon several subjects, including intergovernmental relations, federalism, and the paramountcy principle, matters that have been debated in both houses of Parliament in relation to a wide range of subjects. In essence, this bill seeks to allow provincial governments to impose restrictions on environmental protection activities and land use for projects which the federal government undertakes across the country.

I applaud the member for Repentigny's initiative to give more prominent consideration to the environment and land use when projects and activities that fall under federal jurisdiction are being considered.

The government also believes that the environment is worth protecting. Canadians should know that their governments, at all levels, are working together to achieve economic and environmental objectives and are acting in the interests of their safety and security.

● (1750)

[*English*]

Every day millions of Canadians can go about their lives in an orderly and predictable way. They get into their cars that start and stop as they should; drive on roads where people follow the rules; buy groceries that are free from contaminants; land in airplanes at airports that are safe; drink water that is clean; and sleep well at night, knowing that our police, fire departments, paramedics, and military personnel are on guard for our security.

Our society depends on laws and rules to function, and each level of government is responsible for those things that fall into its jurisdiction. Education, building codes and highways, for example, are primarily provincial responsibilities. Matters such as defence, aeronautics, and radio communications, for example, extend beyond provincial borders and impact the country as a whole. In these areas, it falls to the federal government to implement a nationally consistent approach that serves Canada and its people.

As we all know, the division of powers in Canada has been defined in the Constitution Act, but we also know that this division is not black and white. There are many areas and many issues where interests will cross jurisdictional lines, where two or even three levels of government have a stake in an issue, like the environment, like health, like safety, like employment.

[*Translation*]

The Government of Canada works with the provinces on matters such as education, health, and employment. Likewise, the provinces work with the Government of Canada on matters that fall under federal jurisdiction.

[*English*]

This division of power is essential to maintaining order and predictability in our society. It ensures that we avoid the scenario of too many leaders in one situation or a leadership void when no one else wants to take responsibility in another. In Canada, all jurisdictions must work together on certain issues to promote and protect the interests of all Canadians. Even when we agree to work together, we must still respect jurisdictional boundaries.

Recent Supreme Court decisions on the doctrine of interjurisdictional immunity have stated that provincial and municipal legislation cannot impair core matters of federal jurisdiction over aeronautics or radio communication infrastructure.

[*Translation*]

While these decisions quite clearly establish federal authority on matters such as aerodromes and cell phone towers, the government does not hide behind interjurisdictional immunity to run roughshod over communities.

In fact, to ensure that local concerns are taken into consideration for activities and projects that fall under federal jurisdiction, the government puts processes in place for consultation and the consideration of environmental laws and land use.

[*English*]

I would like to illustrate this point with a few examples.

First, in January 2017, following a regulatory consultation process, Transport Canada implemented a new regulation called Canadian aviation regulation 307–aerodromes–consultations. The regulation was specifically established to require proponents of certain aerodrome projects to consult with affected stakeholders before starting work so local concerns could be identified and mitigated.

As another example, under the Canada Marine Act, Canada port authorities are charged with the management of federal real property and marine assets as well as navigable waters within the ports. In addition to abiding by all federal legislation and regulations, the Canada Marine Act provides for the incorporation of provincial legislation by reference to address specific issues when the need arises. As a result, British Columbia's liquefied natural gas regulation is being applied to the federal lands being managed by the Prince Rupert Port Authority.

My third and final example is the Canada Infrastructure Bank funding program. The Canada Infrastructure Bank acts as a minority partner in delivering federal support to infrastructure projects, alongside co-investment by private sector and institutional investors and sponsoring governments. Projects supported by the bank must respect all applicable laws in the relevant jurisdiction, including any applicable environmental or labour laws. Project sponsors are required to provide assurance to the bank and other investors that all applicable laws in a province have been respected.

The reason these specific examples were chosen is because these initiatives, all of which require consultation and consideration of local issues related to land use and the environment, are taken from the very acts that the private member's bill seeks to amend. There are countless other examples in the same acts and elsewhere that demonstrate the government's commitment to hearing the concerns of Canadians.

● (1755)

[*Translation*]

Because the government is not above listening and improving, it is constantly looking for ways to demonstrate this commitment.

Recently, it introduced Bill C-69, an act to enact the impact assessment act and the Canadian energy regulator act, to amend the Navigation Protection Act and to make consequential amendments to other acts. Bill C-69 exceeds the amendments proposed in Bill C-392 and would explicitly reflect the consideration of environmental, social, safety, health, socio-economic issues, including gender-based impacts, economics, and impacts on indigenous peoples.

Bill C-69 will also provide the public an opportunity to express their views during review processes.

Speaker's Ruling

[*English*]

As we all know, there are many issues that transcend municipal and provincial boundaries, and many others where the federal government may be unaware of local concerns. For this reason, taking a co-operative approach achieves the best possible outcome for all Canadians. With a country as large and diverse as Canada, we must all act in good faith and work together to achieve the best possible results for our economy and the environment and for our citizens.

Co-operation is a fine balance. There have been, and will continue to be, times when differences arise despite our best efforts to work together. Even the strongest relationships will experience disagreements.

[*Translation*]

Bill C-392 would represent a major shift in federal-provincial dynamics in Canada and would undermine the co-operative relationship that we have worked so hard to establish.

Mr. Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is my turn to rise to talk about the bill introduced by my colleague, the member for Repentigny.

I would first like to congratulate my colleague who, as she mentioned herself in her speech, has done a lot of work and research on this. She worked with the legislative counsel of the House to draft a bill that, based on the information she has given us, complies with all constitutional rules and is in order. I doubt that it will really meet all of the court's expectations, but at least some work has been done.

Like me, my colleague very much likes Quebec and defending issues that matter to Quebec. When I was mayor I was involved in a number of jurisdictional disputes. Indeed, mayors are shocked when other levels of government decide for us what we must do or not do in our community. That being said, when I was the mayor of Thetford Mines, we had to manage a creek with a number of other municipalities and if each one of them had decided to manage the creek differently without guidelines, unfortunately, I would not have been able to guarantee the quality of the water at the end of the creek.

That is why I find it commendable that the hon. member wants to return decision-making communities to streamline their decisions, but sometimes streamlining can go too far and gloss over the general interest. That is when mistakes are made. Those decisions might have to be framed better because there are files that have to be managed by other levels of government.

Bill C-392 amends a number of acts, including the Aeronautics Act, the Fishing and Recreational Harbours Act, and also other acts, which I will have the chance to talk about later. The summary reads as follows:

> This enactment amends certain acts to subordinate the exercise of certain powers to the applicable provincial laws concerning land use and development and environmental protection.

Speaker's Ruling

We need to understand that the very nature of the Québec Debout party involves seeking to opt out of all federal legislation. Basically, all that its members want is for Quebec to leave Canada. Without discounting my colleague's excellent work, we should not be surprised that they introduced a bill, as excellent as it may be, whose objective is to allow Quebec to opt out of federal laws. That is their political agenda. They want to leave Canada and they are taking small steps in that direction in the hopes that, one day, one more small step will mean that they no longer need Canada.

That is what is happening here. Unfortunately for them, we saw through their game and we are going to oppose Bill C-392 as it now stands, even though it was well done and my colleague worked very hard. She is a woman of conviction, which is a great thing in Parliament. We can believe different things and express our views.

I could make some recommendations to my Québec Debout colleagues, but I will refrain from doing so because I do not necessarily think that those recommendations would be appreciated.

The Conservative Party of Canada does not like to cause federal-provincial squabbles. We are not here for that. The main reason we are here is to stand up for the interests of Quebeckers and the Quebec nation within Canada. That is what we are working for. The Conservative Party of Canada welcomed the results of yesterday's byelection in Chicoutimi—Le Fjord, where 52% of people voted for a party that will defend Quebec's interests within the Canadian federation.

● (1800)

This bill obviously aims to invert the hierarchical relationship in federal areas of jurisdiction. It could give the provinces a strong power to interfere at the federal level, by simply amending provincial legislation. This would also have an impact on key economic projects. This would have an impact on the economy. If this bill were applied to the legislation of a single province, it would be enough to delay or even kill a project in the national interest, even if this project does not fall under provincial jurisdiction. I believe that the existing rules and regulations already give enough authority—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): I am sorry, but I am trying to listen to the member's speech, which seems quite interesting. I find this very difficult when other members are yelling. I remind members that the Standing Orders allow just one person to speak at a time. The others may whisper among themselves, but we will let the member for Mégantic—L'Érable continue his speech.

The member for Longueuil—Saint-Hubert on a point of order.

● (1805)

Mr. Pierre Nantel: Mr. Speaker, I wanted to say that the member obviously very much appreciates the interaction. He is enjoying it.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): That is not really a point of order, but I thank the member.

The hon. member for Mégantic—L'Érable.

Mr. Luc Berthold: Mr. Speaker, yes, indeed, I love the back and forth, especially when I see the kind of results we had yesterday in Chicoutimi—Le Fjord, where there was tons of back and forth among former supporters of another party who are coming over to ours. I love that kind of back and forth.

I want to get back to the bill, which is way too big. It amends no less than eight important federal laws already in place. We are talking about aerospace, fishing harbours, the national capital, the National Energy Board, radiocommunication, federal government properties, the Canada Infrastructure Bank, and the Canada Marine Act. Basically, the Liberals want to do it all, but I think they have bitten off more than they can chew. Perhaps that is part of the problem with this bill. We saw it coming a mile away.

This bill could create investment uncertainty in Canada's various provinces. It could hurt Quebec's interests. We need to remember that, as well. We have to be careful. If we do not know who is leading when it comes time to talk about a project that affects several provinces at once, I am not sure whether investors will choose to invest in Quebec without that kind of certainty, which can always help.

Despite everything I just said, it is not Québec Debout that represents the most serious threat to the country's unity. Its best ally, I have to say, is the one it has been fighting forever, the centralist Liberal government. We should think about that. This government is incapable of having discussions with the provinces. Its lack of action on several files means that it will soon have a conflict with 50% of the provinces and 79% of Canadians. Just think of Trans Mountain in British Columbia and Alberta, and the carbon tax in Ontario and Saskatchewan. Today, we can add the cannabis issue. There will soon be a fight over home cultivation with Quebec and Manitoba. We have a Prime Minister who insists on continually interfering in provincial jurisdictions. That is the main threat. I think we should work on that. Things are so much worse than what the member for Repentigny is suggesting.

Voters in Chicoutimi—Le Fjord sent a clear message to the Prime Minister and Quebec's sovereignist parties. They are fed up with interference and bickering. Voters clearly stated that they want to be represented by a party that defends their interests, the best interests of Quebec, within the current federal framework. They said that they are tired of treading water, that it is time for a federal party that recognizes the Quebec nation to defend their interests and work on their behalf instead of for the cause. That is the message from the voters in Chicoutimi—Le Fjord and that is what Richard Martel is going to do for them very soon, when he takes his seat in the House.

I would like to close with a quote from a very great man who loves Quebec very much and is not afraid to show it. The Conservative Party's general council was held in Saint-Hyacinthe in May, and it showed how much the party and its Quebec caucus care about the nation of Quebec. The quote I want to end with is, "The Conservatives welcome both nationalists who are fed up with squabbles and federalists who can no longer stand to see [the Prime Minister] living in his Care Bear world. And believe me, there will be many more Michel Gauthiers and Yves Lévesques." Those words were spoken by the leader of the Conservative Party and leader of the official opposition in May in Saint-Hyacinthe. This is just the beginning.

Mr. Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise in the House to outline my position and the position of the NDP on the bill put forward by my colleague from Repentigny.

I think her bill has many interesting elements with regard to respecting the jurisdictions of Quebec and the other provinces, municipal officials, and certain acts and regulations Quebec or other provinces have passed to protect ecosystems, public health, or local residents. Legal and constitutional matters are being raised. There is also the matter of respecting the Quebec nation, as well as respecting the concept known as social licence. Today, no government of any kind can just barge in like in the old days and try to impose its projects in spite of misgivings or fierce opposition from local, regional, or indigenous communities.

I found it hilarious, but at the same time kind of tragic, to hear the Liberal member say earlier that this bill would undermine her party's efforts to promote co-operative federalism.

That takes some nerve. I do not know whether Kinder Morgan, health transfers, or marijuana mean anything to them in terms of co-operative federalism. That is the type of approach they promised to take during the election, but since they took office, the Liberals have been all about unilateralism, federal imperialism, bulldozing, and charging ahead. I think that is absolutely shameful.

In fact, I would like to point something out to the member for Winnipeg North, the parliamentary secretary. He asked a question earlier and I remembered it. I would simply like to tell him that Quebec is not a region. It is a nation. It was not the National Assembly that said that. That was recognized here in the House of Commons and by the Parliament of Canada. I think the member should do his homework and find out exactly what motions have already been adopted here.

The bill introduced by the member for Repentigny has to do with Quebec, of course, but it also has to do with all of the provinces. It seeks to establish a balanced approach that respects the different jurisdictions of the provinces, the federal government, the municipalities, and first nations.

I would like to remind members of the NPD's approach. A few years ago, we had a leader named Jack Layton. He believed that the recognition of the Quebec nation should have implications and consequences, and he took that very seriously. That resulted in a very interesting document entitled the Sherbrooke declaration, drawn up by Pierre Ducasse. The Sherbrooke declaration, which was historically adopted by the NDP, recognizes the Quebec nation and asymmetrical federalism. For years, we have been accused of being a centralist party, but all of the Canada-wide programs that the NDP has proposed have had a Quebec clause that would allow the province to opt out with financial compensation if it was not interested in the program or if it already had an equivalent program. That is what I mean by asymmetrical federalism.

In terms of co-operative federalism, the bill is a step in the right direction. That is why the NDP will proudly support this bill so that it may be studied in committee. We have questions about the mechanics of the bill and how the courts will interpret the fact that we are restoring balance between various jurisdictions and, if possible, those with the best environmental assessments and the strongest social licence. However, I think that this is worth studying. We agree in principle. Second reading is a vote on the principle. We want to refer the bill to committee to be studied. We have some questions, but we think that the spirit of the bill is consistent with our vision. It is also a step in the right direction toward better understanding, to better protect our communities and the people who want to protect their lakes, rivers, farmland, and simply their peace and quiet. They can protect their creek from one end to the other as well. I am sure that if we can sit down and talk about this we will come to an agreement at some point.

● (1810)

The member for Repentigny introduced a bill that will amend eight federal acts, forcing Ottawa to respect applicable provincial laws and municipal regulations governing land use and development.

That is very important because land development is key here and the government has to do a better job of respecting that. This bill will affect wharves, ports, airports, telecommunications infrastructure, federal properties, interprovincial pipelines, and more.

This bill does not explicitly state how it changes the status quo, and that is what we have questions about. The bill simply says that the exercise of the powers in question must comply with provincial laws.

I believe my colleague from Repentigny mentioned an example to do with the Canada National Parks Act, which already takes certain provincial jurisdictions and regulations into consideration. In many cases, the exercise of powers under federal law is already subordinate to provincial laws, including those that govern land development and environmental protection. We do not see this as an inapplicable precedent or something unprecedented. This is the natural extension of a principle we agree with. Remains to be seen how it will apply in real life.

The bill's purpose is to give the governments of Quebec and the other provinces more power over land development within their borders. The bill would require the federal government to recognize agricultural zoning regulations, for example, and to respect more exacting environmental assessments, such as those carried out by the BAPE, Quebec's environmental assessment agency. We can talk more about that.

As the Green Party leader said, the Liberal government's Bill C-69 does not inspire confidence in the seriousness of the government's new environmental assessment processes. In some ways, this bill is full of holes. We do not even know if it will be enforced or if the Minister of Environment and Climate Change will abide by these recommendations. After all, her discretionary power is absolute.

Speaker's Ruling

In accordance with the division of powers under the Constitution, the laws affected by this bill are a matter of federal jurisdiction. According to the Library of Parliament analysis that we requested, it is impossible to determine the legislation's exact scope from its current wording. It is possible that the courts will interpret the provisions of Bill C-392 as an incorporation by reference of provincial laws, meaning that it incorporates, for the purposes of the eight laws amended, the rules set out by the provinces. If it turns out that the courts consider that the provisions of Bill C-392 incorporate by reference the provincial laws related to the eight laws amended, these provincial laws, for the purposes of these eight laws, will be considered to be federal laws. This is a common legislative technique that has a great deal of precedent. However, the real effects remain unknown for the time being. It will be important to examine these points and questions when the bill is studied in committee.

We also consulted David Robitaille, tenured professor in the Faculty of Law at the University of Ottawa. He thinks this bill is interesting and could result in a better division of the responsibilities and decision-making powers between the federal government and provincial governments, or the Government of Quebec in this particular instance.

There are a number of examples in which this could have made a difference if the bill introduced by the member for Repentigny had already been applied. For example, there is the private developer operating near Shawinigan that had the right to operate a small airport on private land or to fly a float plane on a lake, even though it was prohibited by a municipal zoning bylaw or provincial law, such as the Act Respecting the Preservation of Agricultural Land and Agricultural Activities. This is the kind of situation we must stop from happening.

I think it is important to be open, show common sense, and send this bill to committee, so that we can respect Quebec laws, provincial laws, and municipalities.

The current Liberal government violated the rights of indigenous peoples and of British Columbia. It barged in and bought a 65-year-old pipeline for $4.5 billion. It completely disregarded all of the orders from the Government of British Columbia. As a Quebecker, I would be particularly concerned that it might manage to revive a pipeline project like energy east, which had massive opposition throughout Quebec, in Montreal, in the metropolitan area, in towns, and in the regions. Energy east would have crossed 800 rivers in Quebec, including the St. Lawrence. The government needs to understand that it must sit down with Quebec, the provinces, and municipalities to talk things over, like a respectful partner.

● (1815)

[*English*]

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I always welcome the opportunity to comment on private members' bills. As members opposite will know, I am somewhat opinionated on issues that I believe are of national importance. It is not often that I agree with so many comments of my friend from across the way in the Conservative Party. Maybe we can find some commonality among parties inside the chamber, with the possible exception of some Quebec members of Parliament associated with the Bloc. That is why when I posed the question earlier, I made reference to my own heritage.

I am very much a proud Canadian. I think that we live in the best country in the world. I really believe in Canada's diversity and the rich heritage that can be witnessed in all provinces across our country. I am very proud, for example, of the St. Boniface area, with its very large francophone community that is quite possibly the largest in western Canada, as well as St-Pierre-Jolys where my grandparents came from, prior to coming from la belle province of Quebec. I understand the importance of the many different regions and the beauty from within that diversity.

Having said all that, I am very much a nationalist. I believe that we need strong national leadership on a wide number of fronts. It is in all the regions' best interests to have a government that is prepared to demonstrate leadership issues on those important files. That is ultimately, I would suggest, in the nation's best interest. We have witnessed that very recently.

If this bill were to become law, think of the impact it would have on what has been an incredible issue that has been debated and discussed in this chamber for a number of years. It has been fairly well debated even in the last number of days and weeks. That is in regard to the extension of the pipeline, the Trans Mountain expansion, which was deemed to be in Canada's national interest. As a result, we have the national government playing a fairly proactive role in ensuring that the extension takes place. It is sound policy.

My friend across the way talked about the importance of communities and working with communities, provinces, and municipalities. This government takes that very seriously. A good example of that is the Trans Mountain expansion. We have worked closely with not only provinces and municipalities, but as well with indigenous peoples to resolve a very important debate.

When I talked about the Trans Mountain expansion as one of the areas that is in the national interest, I made reference to my home province of Manitoba. I said that Manitoba has been a have-not province in terms of equalization. It is a beautiful province and I am very proud of it. However, in terms of equalization, we have received literally hundreds of millions, going into billions, of dollars on an annual basis.

That is important to note when we take a look at Alberta and the wealth that it has generated, with its contributions to equalization, and the positive impact that it has had on provinces like Quebec, Manitoba, and many others that have received significant amounts of funds through the development of the beautiful resources that we have. In particular, this one here happens to be oil. It has provided for things such as better quality health care, better quality education, and even investments in many environmentally friendly energy or high-tech companies.

I would argue that this legislation, if it were to pass, would prevent the national government from being able to take the actions necessary once it was deemed that this was in the nation's best interests.

● (1820)

In good part, for that reason I cannot support this legislation. I differ from members opposite. There are many federal areas of responsibility. We could talk about airports, parks, and other lands owned and run by the national government and I believe the national government needs to play that leading role. Quite often, leading means working with the different stakeholders.

This is not to take anything away from provincial jurisdiction or municipal responsibilities they carry out. I am very much aware of that. However, I believe Canadians in every region of our country will recognize there is a responsibility of strong leadership coming from Ottawa to protect those ideas and developments in the national interest. An example is transportation corridors, and we can factor into those transportation corridors our airline industries. Check with the municipalities or the City of Montreal on just how economically important, not to mention socially important, the Montreal airport is to the city and the province. This is also the case with other airports throughout our country, even our more rural airports, in terms of the lands and their operations and what sort of impact this legislation could have on them. The federal government has a responsibility to the population as a whole for such issues.

When I look at the national government and the types of things we have seen developed over the years, I see that it does have a role to play in the environment. We have seen very progressive policies, legislation, and commitments through national budgets in the last couple of years. For example, members made reference to Bill C-69.

We have a government that recognizes it has a role to play. Shortly after the Prime Minister was elected, he went to Paris and invited other stakeholders. I do not know if it is the case, but the Premier of Quebec might have been there. However, I believe other stakeholders such as provinces were represented in Paris. Often we find there is a high sense of co-operation between the different levels of government on those important issues, upon their return. Working with Ottawa and provinces, they can come up with good, sound environmental policies. We can learn from provincial jurisdictions. Some provinces are more progressive than others in different areas of development. The federal government has a role to encourage best practices where it can, and to ultimately have that holistic approach in the overall promotion and development of standards across Canada. As well, where necessary, it needs to be more directly involved, as with Trans Mountain.

When we look at the legislation coming before us, what the member is proposing is that Ottawa ultimately transfer its responsibilities to the provinces. Often my concern with members, whether from the Bloc or the separatist element, is that even though part of their motivation on the surface might be to introduce positive legislation, another part of the motivation is to not necessarily do what is in the best interest of the nation as a whole, but for one region of the country.

● (1825)

Ultimately, what is in Canada's best interest is in the best interest of our provinces, both collectively and individually.

We must continue to work with provinces, municipalities, indigenous groups, and others to ensure that we continue to build that consensus so that Canada remains a country of diversity and a country that understands and appreciates the true value of being a federalist state, and so that we ultimately develop our resources.

● (1830)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): The time provided for the consideration of private members' business has now expired, and the item is dropped to the bottom of the order of precedence on the Order Paper.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

● (1835)

[*English*]

FIREARMS ACT

The House resumed consideration of Bill C-71, an act to amend certain acts and regulations in relation to firearms, as reported (with amendments) from the committee, and of the motions in Group No. 1.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): Resuming debate. The hon. member for Prince George—Peace River—Northern Rockies has four minutes coming to him from when he last rose in debate on this matter.

Mr. Bob Zimmer (Prince George—Peace River—Northern Rockies, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I will carry on with where I was before. We talked about part 1 in my reference to what the Liberals are bringing into the front door registry, by giving a copy of the Quebec registry data to Quebec. This is the backdoor registry, as we have referred to many times. I am sitting with my colleagues here, who are largely from Alberta, who know Bill C-71 well. One of the things we picked up on right away when we saw the first draft of this bill was that it would establish that backdoor registry in what is called a registrar, and that the issue of a reference number will be necessary for the transfer of firearms either from a store or from individual to individual.

It would help people who are watching tonight to hear the actual language within the bill. They have heard a lot of promises from the Liberals that they are not going to re-establish a long-gun registry. This lays out in clear language that this is exactly what is going to happen.

A registrar is the head of a registry. That is why the person is called a registrar. Regarding the reference number, the bill states:

> The Registrar shall issue a reference number if he or she is satisfied that the transferee holds and is still eligible to hold a licence authorizing them to acquire and possess a non-restricted firearm.

That alone establishes that this is a registry. I will go into the details too of what is going to be required. One of the things that disturbs us as Canadians was the cost of the former registry. That is one of the big reasons we were opposed to it. It was somewhat of a $2-billion fiasco. That amount of money could have been invested in policing the border and dealing with gangs and guns. They could have put the money where it would really make a difference as opposed to building a bureaucracy.

The registrar would be required to issue a number for the transaction to occur. All that exchange of information would happen. Instead of the information being on government servers somewhere, the government would mandate the business owners to record it and keep the information. The bill states:

> (a) the business must record and, for the prescribed period, keep the prescribed information that relates to the business' possession and disposal of non-restricted firearms;

Again, it is a record of non-restricted firearms interactions and transactions. The bill then states:

> (b) the business must record and — for a period of 20 years from the day on which the business transfers a non-restricted firearm, or for a longer period that may be prescribed — keep the following information in respect of the transfer:

We are talking here about 20 years or more. This is what would be part of the registry that the Liberals are denying is there. It continues:

> (i) the reference number issued by the Registrar,
>
> (ii) the day on which the reference number was issued,
>
> (iii) the transferee's licence number,

That number pinpoints every one of us. If I am going to be that licensee, my name is on my licence and it is attached to the number, so it picks out and says who the person is. It continues:

> (iv) the firearm's make, model and type and, if any, its serial number; and
>
> (c) the business must, unless otherwise directed by a chief firearms officer,

This is the concerning part:

> transmit any records containing the information referred to in paragraph (a) or (b) to a prescribed official if it is determined that the business will cease to be a business.

Part of the concern is where the government tends to go. It tends to creep out. It does not tend to pull in and be more efficient. My concern is that businesses are going to be required to provide this information to the chief firearms officer at his or her request. In this day of real-time information, where we have regular monitoring of our Google accounts 24-7, etc., it is going to be easier to update that information on a real-time basis. That is what most firearms owners, especially non-restricted firearms owners, are concerned about. This is supposed to be only something that is solicited, based on the needs of a particular request of an RCMP officer or whatever. This makes that jump to where it becomes a transmission where the RCMP are monitoring firearms sales on a real-time basis, all the time.

I was in New Brunswick for a few days last week. One thing that was most alarming to the people there was that it is one thing for the Liberals to say they are not going to establish a registry and then do it. Something that rural Canadians are concerned about is not just the registry, but ultimately it is the broken promise that the Liberals were not going to establish a registry.

Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am becoming more and more convinced that this is really good legislation based on some of the arguments I am continuing to hear from the members of the opposition. We can tell that everything they continue to bring up, whether it is with respect to a registry or the terminology that is being used, they are just red herrings, one after another that they are trying to throw out there in hopes that something is eventually going to stick.

The reality of the situation is that nobody believes that this is a registry. Members do not have to take my word for it. The member for Red Deer—Lacombe said that at committee. He said that nobody believes that this is a registry. The Conservatives brought forward an amendment at committee to specifically say to those who would be implementing the law that in no way will this be considered a registry. However, that is not good enough. The Conservatives continue to go on with their talking points, which clearly have been drafted and given to them in the lobby, about how this is a registry, because just maybe it will stick.

The truth of the matter is that it is not sticking. If the member believes that this is a registry, would he kindly explain why the member for Red Deer—Lacombe, who is a member of the same party, does not feel the same way?

Mr. Bob Zimmer: Mr. Speaker, once again the Liberals are highlighting how they will take a quote and spin it and twist it to make it into their factual argument. It is absolute baloney. The fact that they would take somebody who is an advocate in the firearms community and twist his statement to somehow be supportive of their legislation is absolutely disgraceful.

In this chamber we have seen members across the way deny the fact that this is a registry. They have called what we are saying a falsehood when it is absolutely the truth. I have read to this House the verbatim words of the language of this bill which say it is exactly that. It gives a copy of the registry to Quebec. It could not be any more blatant that it is a front door registry.

I do not know what the member needs in order to know the truth. The member across the way who is trying to say that we do not know what we are talking about should read all of the language in the bill that re-establishes the registry on multiple fronts. I think he should try to do that tonight in his spare time.

Mr. Robert Kitchen (Souris—Moose Mountain, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I know the hon. member comes from a rural part of Canada, as do I. No doubt in his riding there are one or two gun shows that happen in various parts of that community. The buyers and sellers who go to those shows, whether to display, purchase, offer for sale, or look at the firearms, are now being challenged. Law-abiding citizens are being challenged on that day should they transport a firearm for sale. I wonder if the member would comment on the challenges that he sees this legislation will cause these people.

Mr. Bob Zimmer: Mr. Speaker, absolutely. The member has brought up part of the bill that I have not really talked about, which is the authorization to transport provisions. We brought in some pretty good provisions in 2015. Once firearms owners are qualified as a restricted firearms owner, as I am, there is a provision where they can take that firearm to the range, a repair facility, or a gun show. This is all based on the criteria that they are licensed, are safe to operate that firearm, and are safe to transport it. That was what we went with in our legislation.

The new legislation proposes to rescind all of those provisions for transport, which made so much sense as they reduced the red tape, so that they would not have to call the local RCMP just to transport their firearm to get it repaired. It is crazy. The resources are already maxed at the RCMP. The last thing its officers need is be answering the phone and giving authorizations to transport.

That is what we tried to do. It is sad that the Liberal government has added a whole level of bureaucracy and red tape for lawful firearms owners. I think it is sad that when the Liberals talk about going after guns and gangs they are going after law-abiding firearms owners. They are not going after guns and gangs. I wish they would.

● (1840)

Mrs. Cheryl Gallant (Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is with the respect and support of the people of my riding, Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke, that I rise today to speak against any Liberal legislation that would lead to another useless, wasteful long-gun registry.

"A gun registry by any other name is still a gun registry." That is a quote from Garry Breitkreuz, a former MP. Those words were spoken by one of the finest members of the House I have ever had the privilege of working with. Garry Breitkreuz was a legendary defender of the rights of the average, middle-class working Canadians, including hunters, farmers, and sports shooting enthusiasts. I intend to channel the spirit of Garry in my comments today.

Already the threat of the Liberal Party bringing back the long-gun registry is a topic of discussion when I am out and about at the various public engagements I am invited to attend. My constituents are following the progress of this legislation very closely. They are disgusted by the cynical, manipulative ploys of the Prime Minister and his party. My constituents assure me they will never, in their lifetime, support a government that thinks harassing law-abiding gun-owning Canadians with useless regulations is fair.

Welcome to the culture wars, where left-wing Liberal Party ideology trumps common sense.

Bill C-71, the "bring back the long-gun registry" legislation, is all about the cynical manipulation of people's fears and what the government is doing to stoke those fears. Bill C-71 has nothing to do with public safety. No sooner had the Liberals tabled this legislation than outrageous, over-the-top appeals for money by the Liberals were sent out to misinform the public about the true intent behind it. Even someone whom the government expected support from was sickened by the cynical manipulation in the Liberal money appeal:

> [A] member of a gun-control advocacy group established in the wake of a 1989 shooting massacre that killed 14 women at Montreal's Polytechnique engineering school said she was shocked at the Liberal message on the heels of the firearm bill.
>
> Meaghan Hennegan, a survivor of the 2006 Dawson College shooting in Montreal who was shot twice by a gunman outside the building in that attack, said the Liberal fundraiser was "insulting."
>
> "We've been pushing for the legislation to be put through for almost three years, and then the second thing they do is go out and start selling it...."
>
> Hennegan said the fundraiser makes the Liberals appear to be exploiting the gun-control issue.

Welcome to the culture wars.

The decision to include Hill+Knowlton lobbyists and Liberal insiders Peter Donolo and David Rodier as consultants on Bill C-71 is proof that the government was never really serious about consulting the public about this legislation. Donolo wrote a public opinion piece in *The Globe and Mail* in February, in which he said, "it is now much easier in Canada to own a gun than to drive a car." The Liberals used taxpayers' dollars to have an opinion piece published to promote Bill C-71. Lobbyists should disclose they are being paid by the government to author articles paid for with tax dollars.

Responsible firearms owners know that legally owning a gun requires taking a safety course designed by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. It requires passing a written and a practical test, waiting two months to pass background and reference checks to obtain an RCMP-authorized firearms licence card, and then passing a daily RCMP background check to be allowed to keep it. All legal gun owners are registered with the federal police, and so are all the privately owned handguns and AR-15 rifles.

Also with Hill+Knowlton, David Rodier is a former lobbyist for the Coalition for Gun Control and a former adviser to Allan Rock, the Liberal minister of justice who led the 1995 passage of Bill C-68, the firearms act. Rodier co-wrote an article in *Policy Options* magazine in March of this year, which concluded that "[g]un control presents an untapped opportunity" for the Liberal Party to win votes in the next election.

Bill C-71 will not stop gun violence in Toronto. According to a Toronto media outlet, there has been an 11% increase of shootings in Toronto from the same time in 2017, with 176 shootings, 18 fatal.

● (1845)

The last time there was this much gun violence in Toronto, with 359 shootings and 52 deaths, was the year when the member for marijuana from Scarborough Southwest, who is the spokesperson for making pot legal, assumed control of the Toronto police force. The police unit he created that year to respond to gun violence had, and I quote the *Toronto Star* of June 8, 2018, "a 10-year history of arbitrary stops and searches, allegations of assault and a public strip search in broad daylight" and "it left troubled neighbourhoods increasingly mistrustful of officers."

That type of approach and Bill C-71 will not stop gun violence in Toronto.

Every illegal gun does not begin as a legal gun. In Canada, restricted firearms, including handguns, are registered, and have been since 1934. Turning hunters and farmers into scapegoats to deflect attention from how badly the Prime Minister is performing sickens members of the public.

In my riding, demonstrations against the Liberal long-gun registry the last time similar legislation was brought forward were not occupied by young people being manipulated by radicals funded by foreign interests. Those demonstrations were held by middle-aged firearm owners, whose first reflex is to respect the laws of the land, whose parents and their parents before them built this great nation.

Welcome to the culture wars.

The creation by the Liberals of a new criminal class, Canadians who may happen to own a firearm, or Canadians who believe that it is their democratic right to dissent against Liberal policies they reject, and who refuse to sign loyalty attestations, is the ultimate trademark of the current federal government, which excels in the practice of negative politics. Canadians reject negative, mean-spirited politics in the same way they rejected the Liberal long-gun registry when it was first introduced in Bill C-68.

The political alienation of rural Canadians by the Liberals was a far greater loss than the $2 billion-plus that had been wasted on an experiment in social engineering. It was an experiment that backfired on the Liberal Party, and it continues to backfire. This may be the worst and most enduring product of the gun registry culture war.

When it comes to the right to use and enjoy private property, my constituents all know my stand. I defend their right to own private property with the same vigour with which I defend the right of all Canadians to dissent.

Whenever constituents in my riding hear a Liberal use mealy-mouthed words like "enhancement of community safety", they put their hand on their wallet, run home, and make sure the lock on their gun cabinet is safe.

We should have no doubt about it: Bill C-71 is the starting point to bring back the 1995-era gun registry we all fought so hard and long to get rid of. We knew this was coming when the real power behind the throne, PMO party insider Gerald Butts, stacked the firearms advisory committee with a majority of people who lack the professionalism and expertise of the people they replaced.

It is clear the Liberals did not learn their lesson the last time, with Bill C-68. That is certainly what my constituents are telling me when they find out that the Liberals are downloading a provincial gun registry, starting with Quebec. Regulating and legislating against law-abiding people, which is what we are talking about here, is just as unacceptable today as it was back when Bill C-68 became the rallying cry for protests across Canada.

When I was first elected, I was elected on the promise to protect the rights of average Canadians. That includes opposing bad legislation like Bill C-71, an act to harass law-abiding Canadians.

Among the useless aspects of Bill C-71 is confirming the licence for non-restricted firearms transfer. It is already expected under current law when the PAL is shown to a vendor. As per section 101 of the Criminal Code and section 23 of the Firearms Act, it is already a crime punishable by five years of imprisonment to transfer a firearm of any kind to an individual who does not possess a licence to obtain or possess this type of firearm.

Having to call the CFP for every single transaction and obtain a reference number serves no other purpose than to keep a record of firearms transfer. By matching the PAL to the transaction reference number, the RCMP can connect firearms to specific individuals, and this is building the framework and infrastructure for another wasteful and ineffective long-gun registry.

● (1850)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the facts do not matter and neither does the reality. The Conservatives have a narrative. Even though it defies reality and is just untrue, this particular member, like the members across the way, has no problem with it. It is almost like putting the blinders on: It does not matter to them if it is true or not, this is what they are going to say.

Let us take a look at what the Conservative public safety critic said. He moved an amendment in committee, which reads:

> (4) For greater certainty, nothing in this Act shall be construed so as to permit or require the registration of non-restricted firearms.

This was a Conservative amendment, and it passed unanimously. The Liberals, the NDP, and the Conservatives all said yes to it. What did the Conservative member who moved it say in committee when the cameras were off? He said, "everybody at this table agrees that this is not a registry". That does not fit the Conservative narrative. When the cameras are on and when Conservatives believe they can make money and cause division, out comes that narrative, which is completely void of reality.

Was the Conservative member wrong when he moved that amendment in committee, or is the Conservative Party wrong in the statements it makes inside this chamber, knowing full well that this has nothing to do with the long-gun registry?

Mrs. Cheryl Gallant: Mr. Speaker, the member opposite can distort what happens in committee, but the provincial chief firearms officer would be completely within his or her authority to record not only buyer and seller information, but also make, model, and serial number of firearms being transferred. Furthermore, it would force businesses to keep 20 years of records, including on make, model, serial number, and buyers' information.

This information is another step toward a backdoor registry, and would be accessible to the CFO. The provincial CFO already has the authority to, at any time it wishes and without warrant, audit a business's records, and make as many copies as it wants. Furthermore, under Bill C-71, should a business close, all records would be turned over to the RCMP rather than be destroyed.

Then we have the issue of lifetime background checks, but I will get into that after the next question.

Mr. Arnold Viersen (Peace River—Westlock, CPC): Mr. Speaker, without a doubt, this is the backdoor long-gun registry. I think the words "registrar" or "register" were in the bill over 13 times.

This is a particularly interesting bill when you see it in light of Bill C-75, which I like to call the "hug-a-thug" bill. In Bill C-75, the government seems to be reducing the sentencing for all kinds of crimes.

Does my hon. colleague have an opinion on how this Liberal government is viewed by the general public in terms of Bill C-71 on the one hand, and Bill C-75 on the other?

Mrs. Cheryl Gallant: Mr. Speaker, Bill C-71 was introduced on the premise that it was supposed to stop gun and gang violence, but Bill C-75 would taking out all of the minimum mandatory sentences for crimes committed using firearms. They are at cross-purposes. Bill C-71 would regulate law-abiding citizens even more, and Bill C-75 would let criminals off the hook, allowing them to get out of jail sooner and back on the streets committing crime.

Mr. James Bezan (Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am proud as a licenced firearms owner to be speaking today against Bill C-71.

I have been listening to the debate, and I am quite amazed at the ridiculous comments coming from Liberal members.

For the member of Winnipeg North to claim that the amendment that was proposed by the Conservatives to ensure "with certainty" in the beginning of the bill that is not a registry and that this somehow changes the rest of the bill is ridiculous. That clause would put the rest of the act in conflict, and it is contrary to what it says. If Bill C-71 would no longer be a registry, then we should be striking out all the words in it that refers to "a registry" and "a registrar".

As Conservatives, we will always support sound policy that ensures the safe storage and handling of firearms. All of us as licenced firearms owners have to take the proper courses to ensure that our firearms are stored kept under lock and key. We will support the proper screening of those who are applying to become firearms owners.

We want to ensure, as we go forward, that firearms are classified on function and not on visual looks. We also have to ensure that everyone who commits a crime using a firearm is properly treated under the Criminal Code. However, Bill C-75 would do none of that. Bill C-75 does not mention criminals, gangs, gun dealers, and is completely mute on the subject, and for that I am appalled.

Then, when we combine Bill C-71 with Bill C-75, the proposal coming from the Liberals to amend the Criminal Code, those guys want to look like they are getting tough on crime, but they are getting tough on legal firearms owners. When it comes down to the real criminals, the Liberals are going to take indictable offences that provide jail time and mandatory minimum sentences to criminal offenders and turn them into fines, a slap on the wrist. Those types of summary convictions are no way to treat real criminals, but that is the hug-a-thug, soft-on-crime Liberal mentality.

Here they are getting tough on firearms owners. They are going to make it more difficult for us to own and transport our firearms and transfer them to other people. However, if someone commits assault with a weapon, then that person can have a summary conviction, get a slap on the wrist and a fine. If people participate in a terrorist group or leave Canada to participate in a terrorist group, the Liberals are just going to slap them on the wrist and maybe put them on house arrest. There will be no mandatory minimums; it is going to be a summary conviction.

There are over 27 things. People could advocate for genocide, or abduct someone under the age of 16 or children under the age of 14 and get summary convictions. That soft-on-crime mentality is percolating through those Liberal benches, which is making Canada more dangerous. However, they are taking law-abiding firearms owners, the most law-abiding citizens in the country, and turning them into criminals. It is ridiculous. I find the mantra of the Liberals completely disgusting.

Nothing in Bill C-71 will fix the gang violence and the gun violence on our streets, whether it is in Toronto, Winnipeg, Ottawa, Montreal, or Vancouver. It will do nothing to stop it. Nor will it stop the crimes that we see in our rural communities and rural areas where there are more and more home invasions and properties being ransacked.

The member for Winnipeg North was saying that the bill had nothing to do with a registry. As has already been pointed out, in Bill C-71, subsection 29(1) says that we can provide a copy from the Canadian Firearms Registry to the Quebec government if the Quebec minister requests it. It is right here. The front-door gun registry, the actual registry that existed until 2015, is being moved over to the Quebec government.

The bill also talks about this issue of whether there is a registry. If there is no registry, why is there is a registrar in the bill? Bill C-71 keeps talking about the registrar. In section 23 paragraph (2) provides for reference numbers for the transfer of a firearm from one owner to another. We know that registrars keep reference numbers, because they have a registry.

• (1855)

Regardless of the rhetoric coming from across the way, we have a situation where the bill again establishes a backdoor gun registry on top of the front-door registry, with records being transferred to the province of Quebec.

We know that the registrar along with the chief firearms officers in each province will monitor the movement of our firearms from one area to the other. The only thing that will keep is that those of us who own firearms that are restricted in nature will be able to take them to our shooting clubs and ranges without having to get an authorization to transport that firearm.

However, if we want to take that firearm to a gun show, or a gunsmith to be fixed and maintained or even to return it to a peace officer, if we no longer wanted to have a firearm, or we did not want to pass it on to our family or sell it to a friend or a neighbour, we would have to get an authorization to transfer it. That is ridiculous, but that is the type of thing the Liberals believe in and that is what they have put in the bill. That is disturbing.

We can look at 2016 and look at what Gary Mauser at Simon Fraser University, who has done a lot of this work, had to say. Essentially he said that in 2016, out of the 223 gun murders that occurred, only 2% were committed by licenced firearms owners. Over half of them were committed by those involved in gangs. If the drug cartels, the biker gangs, the different gang organizations out there are committing most of the firearm offences, causing murders and criminality, then should we not be concentrating on them rather than giving them a pass in Bill C-75, rather than ignoring them completely in Bill C-71? Why are the Liberals always ready to turn a blind eye to crimes being committed by gangs.

We know criminals do not register their firearms. We know criminals do not buy their firearms from Cabela's or any other store that sells firearms. It is a ridiculous idea and an asinine policy to burden legal firearms owners, to burden our retail outlets that sell firearms with extra red tape and extra bureaucracy. They may not have to pay for a registration fee anymore, but we know all this data will be in the hands of the Government of Canada. We know that all this data, when it comes down to transferring firearms, when it comes down to transferring ownership between individuals, will be kept with a registrar. Registrars are the operators of registries.

Again, I am disappointed. It is almost 20 years since Allan Rock brought forward the first gun registry, which the Conservatives worked long and hard to get rid of it. I committed myself to that back in 1993. Here we are in 2018, talking about the Liberals bringing back an other gun registry. It is back to the future. It is the same old, same old when it comes to the tired Liberal governments. We cannot allow that to continue.

I call on all members of the House to vote against this poorly thought-out legislation, which would do absolutely nothing to protect Canadians. It would do absolutely nothing to enhance the screening of firearms ownership in the country. It would do absolutely nothing to help with our border services to stop illegal transport of firearms into the country.

This has been poorly thought out, but I am not surprised. It is coming from the Liberal government. It is an attack on law-abiding citizens, farmers, hunters, sports shooters, men and women who pass this culture on to their children and grandchildren, and I am proud to be part of that. I am ashamed to see the Liberals ramming this down our throats once again.

● (1900)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the member made reference to an increase of paperwork or regulations. I posed a question earlier to one of his colleagues about retailers and how responsible they had been over the years. In fact, at one time, retailers were registering. Many of those retailers continue to register, even during this period of time when there has not been anything in place.

This legislation puts it in place. People have to register to buy when they are in the United States. I do not quite understand the connection the member across the way is trying to make, saying that this is going to be overly burdensome for our retailers.

I am interested in my colleague and friend's comments in regard to this. The Conservatives proposed amendment 40.2 in committee. A civil servant spoke about the impact the amendment would have if it were passed. Offences for which there would be punishment included making of false statements to procure a licence, false statements to procure a customs confirmation, so importing or trafficking, tampering with licences, unauthorized possession of ammunition, non-compliance with a demand to produce a firearm. That is just one of the amendments.

Would my friend agree with me that his Conservative colleague, who happened to be your critic for this legislation, advanced that amendment? Would the member opposite support that amendment as his colleague did? I would be interested in the member's thoughts.

● (1905)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): I want to remind hon. members to speak through the Speaker. I am sure he did not mean my critic. The Speaker does not have any critics. The Speaker is very neutral.

The hon. member for Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman.

Mr. James Bezan: Mr. Speaker, if the member had read the bill, it says in the summary, "(b) require, when a non-restricted firearm is transferred, that the transferee's firearms licence be verified by the Registrar of Firearms and that businesses keep certain information related to the transfer." It is a registry. It is red tape. There is extra cost. That was not required for the past five years, but it has been brought back with a vengeance by the Liberals.

We should keep in mind that the information that was kept voluntarily by retail outlets was done for warranty work. It was done because retailers were standing behind the products they sold. That is why they were keeping that buyer information. They were not sharing it.

I find this quite disturbing. Again, the misinformation and rhetoric coming from the Liberals is not at all helpful in informing this debate.

I would also like to point out that as Conservatives, we will always work on policy that will develop the best possible way to keep criminals behind bars.

Ms. Rachel Blaney (North Island—Powell River, NDP): Mr. Speaker, during the work in the committee, I was very proud to have someone from my riding, Sid Nielsen, come forward. He is an instructor in our riding. He does a lot of fantastic work. He recently took my son through his process to get his PAL. I really appreciate his work.

One of the things he has brought up and has shared a lot of concern about is the fact that right now on the licence, on the PAL, after this legislation goes through, people will no longer have the ability to take their guns to a gunsmith. Today the minister sort of talked about it, but he really did not answer the question. That is a huge concern.

If people have live guns in their homes and they are waiting for permission to transport them, it could be a high-risk situation. I would like to hear the member's comments on that.

Mr. James Bezan: Mr. Speaker, I have been to the member's riding. It is a very rural riding, and I am sure there are a lot of hunters and gun owners who obey the law and want to ensure they handle the guns safely.

One of those things people do to handle their firearms safely is ensure they are properly maintained. In this legislation, people now will have to get an authorization to transport their non-restricted firearms to a gun shop. That makes absolutely no sense at all. We should be able to take our non-restricted firearms and restricted firearms to the gunsmith to get them fixed as required.

The removal of that provision in the legislation by the Liberals does not enhance public safety; it is actually undermining it by potentially making guns dangerous because they could misfire, they could be poorly maintained. Sometimes, extra bureaucratic work has to be done. The people will have to contact the firearms officer for the province to get an authorization so they can move their firearms for the one particular day they have been give authorization to do so. That is silly.

● (1910)

Hon. Kevin Sorenson (Battle River—Crowfoot, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to stand again in the House tonight on behalf of the constituents of Battle River—Crowfoot to speak to Bill C-71. For those perhaps watching at home, we need to at least give some context as to why we are here.

Today is June 19. We are scheduled to break for the summer this week, and the government is trying to push legislation through that it would like to have before the summer break. We anticipate tomorrow that it will bring forward the cannabis bill and may well try to push that through. However, today the government has put time allocation on a gun bill, Bill C-71. It is trying to do it at the very end of a session, thinking that the opposition will probably not stand and debate it too long. We will stand and fight bad legislation as long as it takes to represent our constituents and Canada.

The government has brought in through the back door another piece of gun legislation. Some say it is an easy step from here to a gun registry. Others say this is a gun registry, albeit not as expensive as the $2-billion boondoggle the Liberals attempted before. This bill sounds an awful lot like a piece of gun registry legislation.

For those watching, there may be some who say, "There is so much gang activity. There is so much crime in our major cities. Why doesn't the government stand up and do something to fight that crime?" This bill is in response to that. The minister stood and said that they were concerned about gun offences and crime and other things and that the bill would answer that.

We talked to every gun club, firearm association, rifle association, and recreational, angling, and sporting association. I do not know of one that supports this legislation. Why is that? The reason none of them support the legislation is a tough one. First, their major frustration is that they see that this would do absolutely nothing to curtail crime, gang crime, street gangs, and that type of criminal activity that is on some of the streets of our major cities. The government says it is going to bring forward a bill that will remedy some of those problems. Every gun association I know of says that this is not going to solve any of it, because all the government is doing with the legislation today is adding red tape, making it more difficult to own a firearm and making it more frustrating for those who have to transport a firearm.

I am a registered firearm owner, and I know exactly what has to happen when people want to own a firearm. I know the courses they have to take. I know the regulations around safe storage they have to accommodate. I know that those who typically get a licence and go through and register for the course are, by and large, very safe gun operators. I have met many who are speaking to youth and children about the safe operation of a firearm.

What would Bill C-71 do? Why is it problematic? Why are people standing and opposing this type of legislation? First, for the background check for an individual, it would leave the five-year background check and basically look at the entire lifespan to see if a person should qualify for a firearm. Therefore, anyone who, even in high school, ended up in fisticuffs with someone, and 20 years later wanted to obtain a firearm, that could come up in this background check. Someone could very well evaluate the information and say that the person is disqualified.

● (1915)

I have had cases in my constituency where, at the time of a divorce, a very stressful time, people have said things that 15 minutes later they would not have said. In fact, I had one case of a lady who phoned my office and basically told my staff that when she was asked if there was any domestic offence, she said that she was scared of him and that he had all these firearms, and they came and confiscated his firearms. By the way, the same lady contacted me probably a year or so later and told me that she had said that, but they had settled, and he was not a problem at all. Now, how could he go about trying to win back his firearms?

There are just so many questions about this new piece of legislation, but there should not be a question about one thing. This legislation would make it more difficult for law-abiding firearm owners, such as farmers and hunters, to operate and purchase all of the above. It would extend the background check. We do not know about the qualifications of those who would be evaluating the information or what the criteria for the evaluation would be based on. Why would there be no appeal process in this?

The Speaker is calling time, and I have not made it to my fifth point. I have not made it to the second.

The second point I think is very problematic is that it would limit the amount of transportation of that firearm. It used to be that if I wanted to purchase a firearm, I could bring it home immediately. My understanding is that one could still do that. However, now if there was a problem with a restricted firearm, I could not just take it to a gunsmith for repair. I would have to call in and explain it all. I would now have to go through more red tape if I was going to get my firearm fixed. A lot of times, when people do this, it is exactly when they are ready to use it in the lead-up to hunting season, when all of a sudden, they realize that the firing pin is not working right and they want to get it fixed.

Why would transport to and from a gun store for appraisal for a sale be taken away? We do not know, other than that the Liberals want to add red tape to frustrate those gun owners.

The other issue is licence verification. To me, this is very important. In my riding, in Hanna, Consort, Castor, Torrington, and a lot of other communities, they have gun shows. At these gun shows, people come from all across Canada. In a little town of 200, 300, 400, or 500 people, and in Castor maybe close to 800 people, they will fill the arena. People will come from across Canada, and maybe some from the United States, to purchase old collector firearms or new firearms. To do a transfer, even at a gun show, they would now have to get a purchasing number and a transfer number. They would have to go through all this red tape, in a rural riding where there is very little cell coverage to begin with.

A concern that has also been brought to me is what the chances would be, on a Sunday afternoon, of being able to get through to a government number to get that verification number. What are the chances? If I tried to get through to Revenue Canada today, I would need to be prepared to sit on the line for 45 minutes. If at a gun show I wanted to purchase a gun from maybe a farmer or someone who had a booth or table there, now they would have to call in and get a number and verify my licence. In my opinion, it is going to shut down an economic driver in some of these small towns where they have gun shows on the weekends.

I could go on. I have not talked at all about other parts of licence verification. I am told that my time is up. To sell a firearm, they would have to keep records for 20 years.

● (1920)

It is bad legislation. I would encourage all members of the House to fight crime and recognize that we have to do things about crime, but this would not solve anything.

Mr. Don Davies (Vancouver Kingsway, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I want to pick up on one of the themes my colleague ended his speech on, which is the issue of crime and criminality. Right now in the Lower Mainland of British Columbia, specifically in Surrey, but not only there, we have a very serious gang problem and a gang war going on. A number of young men, primarily South Asian young men, have been shot to death, sometimes in public, not only putting them at risk but also sometimes innocent bystanders.

The community in Surrey is really upset about this and the lack of action they see by their Liberal representatives and the government. One thing they raise is that the government announced $375 million for a strategy last fall to deal with these kinds of problems, and they have not seen a nickel of it in their community or anywhere.

I am wondering if my hon. colleague has any thoughts on how this legislation or the government's approach to dealing with crime in our communities may be impacted by the bill and what suggestions he would have for the people in Surrey who want their streets safe and their young people to have opportunities so that gang life is not attractive to them.

Hon. Kevin Sorenson: Mr. Speaker, my colleague is right. This does not address the issue of criminality. It does not address the issue of unauthorized possession of firearms by gangs. It does not at all touch on gang violence. I have news for the Liberals. There are not a lot of gun shops in my constituency where gangs are coming to purchase firearms. In some cases, it may be those stores they try to rip off to access firearms. The criminal element in our country brings in illegal firearms, and we see very little going to that.

The member has a problem in his riding that he is very vocal about, and that is the opioid crisis. I saw in an article today that 4,000 Canadians have been killed in the opioid crisis, and they do not know how to respond to that one either. We do not have a problem with long guns and law-abiding gun owners.

The issue is that there is so much money that is given to the file of public safety around firearms. Now the Liberals will have to add money to this type of legislation, and they will take it away from other parts within the same department that does fight crime, that does go up against the gangs and the criminal element. That is the problem. Resources that should be going to fight crime are going to fight farmers, hunters, and law-abiding firearms owners.

Mr. Lloyd Longfield (Guelph, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have been following the discussion this evening trying to make some sense of where the opposition party would like to see us head with gun legislation. It is like climate change legislation we have discussed, where we are looking for the alternative being proposed by the Conservative Party. Is the alternative to follow the legislation the Americans have in both cases, or do they have any other positive suggestions they could make in terms of this legislation?

Hon. Kevin Sorenson: Mr. Speaker, I am surprised by my Liberal colleagues, who always like to compare us with the United States any time we defend lawful farmers and firearms owners. There is no comparison between the Canadian system and the American system. Zero. There is none.

Again, I believe that Canadians expect that we put in safe regulations, which we have. I have to go through an afternoon or a whole day of courses to be able to purchase a firearm. That is the point. The person who is in a gang does not have to go through that. He just buys one off the street, which the Liberals cannot seem to shut down.

What does the member suggest we do? First of all, we want to continue to educate. We want to say that we are all right with the PAL. We are okay with going through that type of exercise to own a firearm. The other thing we could do is continue to recognize safe storage. This is a very important part that makes sense. We do not have a problem with that. Gun owners I know realize that there are some expectations, and they all believe that this is over the top.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

● (1925)

[*English*]

COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

MOTION FOR TRAVEL

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. There have been discussions among the parties and I suspect if you were to seek it, you would find unanimous consent for me to move a motion related to travel for standing committees.

I move:

That, in relation to its study of Needs and Issues Specific to Indigenous Veterans, Part 2, seven members of the Standing Committee on Veterans Affairs be authorized to travel to Whitehorse, Yukon, and Yellowknife, Northwest Territories, in the Summer and Fall 2018, and that the necessary staff accompany the Committee;

That, in relation to its study on Canada's Sovereignty in the Arctic, seven members of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development be authorized to travel to Iqaluit and Cambridge Bay, Nunavut, and Yellowknife and Inuvik, Northwest Territories, in the Summer and Fall 2018, and that the necessary staff accompany the Committee;

That, in relation to its study of the Pre-Budget Consultations in Advance of the 2019 Budget, seven members of the Standing Committee on Finance be authorized to travel to Toronto and Oshawa, Ontario, Québec, Quebec, Saint John, New Brunswick, and Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island, in the Summer and Fall 2018, and that the necessary staff accompany the Committee;

That, in relation to its study of the Pre-Budget Consultations in Advance of the 2019 Budget, seven members of the Standing Committee on Finance be authorized to travel to Winnipeg, Manitoba, Edmonton, Alberta, Victoria, British Columbia, and Whitehorse, Yukon, in the Summer and Fall 2018, and that the necessary staff accompany the Committee;

That, in relation to its study of the Pre-Budget Consultations in Advance of the 2019 Budget, seven members of the Standing Committee on Finance be authorized to travel to Sacramento, the San Francisco Bay Area and the Silicon Valley, California, and Houston, Texas, United States of America, in the Summer and Fall 2018, and that the necessary staff accompany the Committee;

That, in relation to its study of the Current State of Department of Fisheries and Oceans' Small Craft Harbours, seven members of the Standing Committee on Fisheries and Oceans be authorized to travel to Vancouver Island, Prince Rupert, Bella Bella and Port Hardy, British Columbia, the Lake Winnipeg area, Selkirk and Gimli, Manitoba, the Southern Georgian Bay, the Bruce Peninsula, Toronto, Meaford, Tobermory and Wiarton, Ontario, in the Summer and Fall 2018, and that the necessary staff accompany the Committee;

That, in relation to its study of the Action Plan for Official Languages 2018-23: Investing in Our Future, seven members of the Standing Committee on Official Languages be authorized to travel to Whitehorse, Yukon, Regina, Saskatchewan, and Vancouver, British Columbia, in the Summer and Fall 2018, and that the necessary staff accompany the Committee;

That, in relation to its study of Canada's Contributions to International Peacekeeping, seven members of the Standing Committee on National Defence be authorized to travel to New York, New York, United States of America, in the Summer and Fall 2018, and that the necessary staff accompany the Committee;

That, in relation to the Annual Conference of the Canadian Council of Public Accounts Committees (CCPAC) and the Canadian Council of Legislative Auditors (CCOLA) Annual Conference, seven members of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts be authorized to travel to Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island, in the Fall 2018, and that the necessary staff accompany the Committee;

That, in relation to the 2018 Westminster Workshop and the Second Conference of the Commonwealth Association of Public Accounts Committees, three members of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts be authorized to travel to London, United Kingdom, in the Fall 2018, and that the necessary staff accompany the Committee;

That, in relation to its study of Indigenous People in the Correctional System, seven members of the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security be authorized to travel to Saskatoon, Duck Lake and Maple Creek, Saskatchewan, Edmonton and Maskwacis, Alberta, and Québec and Donnacona, Quebec, in the Summer and Fall 2018, and that the necessary staff accompany the Committee;

That, in relation to its study of the Canadian Transportation and Logistics Strategy (Trade Corridors), seven members of the Standing Committee on Transport, Infrastructure and Communities be authorized to travel to Vancouver, British Columbia, the Niagara Region and Toronto, Ontario, and Seattle, Washington State, United States of America, in the Summer and Fall 2018, and that the necessary staff accompany the Committee.

● (1930)

The Speaker: Does the hon. member have the unanimous consent of the House to propose the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Speaker: The House has heard the terms of the motion. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

(Motion agreed to)

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*English*]

FIREARMS ACT

The House resumed consideration of Bill C-71, an act to amend certain acts and regulations in relation to firearms, as reported (with amendments) from the committee, and of the motions in Group No. 1.

Mr. Larry Maguire (Brandon—Souris, CPC): Mr. Speaker, there is little evidence to justify the many changes found in the Liberals' firearms legislation proposed as Bill C-71. They are trying to fix a problem that does not exist. In fact, they would only further burden law-abiding firearms owners rather than actually going after people who commit crimes. I, for one, would prefer that our law enforcement agencies and the Government of Canada spend their time, energy, and resources on cracking down on gangs and criminals.

To step back for a moment, law-abiding firearms owners do not trust the Liberal government. They do not believe that the changes found in Bill C-71 would actually make our streets safer or put criminals behind bars.

I want to focus my comments on two aspects of the legislation that are deeply flawed and why I believe the bill must be defeated.

In the last Parliament, our previous Conservative government passed the Common Sense Firearms Licensing Act. Found in that legislation was the sensible change of introducing an automatic authorization to transport firearms. This meant that individuals were no longer required to contact the RCMP for certain routine and lawful activities as it became a condition of a restricted PAL holder's licence. This was a common-sense change. Why would law-abiding licensed owners need to notify the RCMP that they were taking their licensed firearm to a firing range? By adding the authorization to transport their firearm as part of their licence, it freed up valuable RCMP resources. It must be said that if the firearms owners did not follow the conditions as part of their licence, they would have it revoked, which is a very severe punishment.

If the government is going to give someone the right to own a firearm, to shoot a firearm, to store a firearm, to compete with a firearm, why would we not give them the automatic right to transport a firearm?

Found in the legislation, the Liberals are reverting to the old ways of not trusting responsible law-abiding Canadians to automatically transfer their firearms. Why? Well, they think it suits their political needs, and there is ample evidence to back that statement.

Before the last election, the Liberal Party went as far as scaring the public by suggesting that an automatic authorization to transport firearms was going to make Canada less safe. During question period on November 26, 2014, the now leader of the Liberals said that the right to have an automatic authorization to transfer a firearm would "allow handguns and assault weapons to be freely transported in a trunk anywhere within a province, even left parked outside a Canadian Tire or local hockey arena". This was and remains a very erroneous statement. The law is quite clear when it says that one is only allowed to transport prohibited or restricted firearms "between two or more specified places for any good and sufficient reason". If we dig even further into the regulations, it says that they must transfer their firearms by "reasonably direct" routes.

While the Liberals are entitled to their opinions, they are not entitled to ignore the facts. They cannot just purport something to be true while the law says something completely different.

For those thinking that calling up the RCMP every time they want to get authorization to transport a firearm is not that big a deal, let me put on the record the number of times the RCMP previously had to go through this process. Since 2008, the RCMP issued 992,139 authorizations. That is almost one million phone calls. For argument's sake, let us just say that it takes an average of eight minutes to get this process done. That is 132,285 hours that the RCMP could have used on investigating crimes and patrolling our streets and highways.

Now that we have established the inordinate amount of time this process takes, with little evidence that it actually enhances public safety, let us dig further into the numbers. If we really think that the RCMP's issuing authorization to firearms is doing something to keep our streets safe, people might want to know that over the past seven years, out of close to one million authorizations issued, only 17 have been refused. This would indicate that it is a fruitless endeavour that really does not accomplish a whole lot.

● (1935)

With all that in mind, what evidence did the Liberals put forward for why we have to revert to the old ways? They put forward nothing.

When the Hells Angels start calling the RCMP to let the RCMP know when they are transferring their firearms, I might change my tune on this matter. However, until criminals decide to start applying for firearms licences, I think we should call a spade a spade and admit that seeking an authorization to transfer a firearm does nothing to enhance the safety of Canadians.

The second part of this deeply flawed legislation is the removal of any oversight of the classification of firearms. For years, there was no recourse or appeal process if a firearm was not correctly classified. That meant the individuals in charge of this process could make millions of dollars' worth of property worthless with the stroke of a pen. While I am not a hunter or a sport shooter, I can understand their frustration when a firearm they have owned for years, or in some cases even decades, is suddenly prohibited.

No one in the House is suggesting that classifying firearms should not be taking place. All we are asking for is an appeal process, or at the very least a very clear understanding of the regulations that determine the classification of a firearm.

I want to be very clear that firearms should not receive a classification based on their appearance. Their classification should solely be based on their form and function.

If the Liberals wanted to provide greater clarity on the classification of firearms, they would have legislated the firearms reference table into law. The firearms reference table information is used during the process of firearms identification, classification, tracing, importation, and registration. Right now, the public has no ability to find out what is contained in the firearms reference table or to find out the justification of why a firearm was classified as it was.

I want to salute Matthew Hipwell, a former RCMP officer who served for 17 years, for bringing this issue to the public safety committee during its study of Bill C-71. It was Matthew who brought to the committee's attention that Murray Smith of the RCMP said, "the Firearms Reference Table has no standing in law. It's simply the...viewpoint of the firearms program on classification and description of any particular item."

This has led to all sorts of problems, as the definitions to determine a classification are neither clearly nor legally defined. They are open to different interpretation and opinion. An example is the use of the word "variant". There is no legal definition of "variant". Another challenge in correctly classifying a firearm is the definition of "readily and easily", which would be applied when determining if a firearm can be reconfigured.

If the firearms reference table has no standing in law, why are the Liberals completely gutting the ability of cabinet, made up of elected representatives, to overturn a wrongful classification? This was the only possible way to correct a wrongful classification. People who want to challenge the classification of a firearm would actually have to be arrested. That is the most irresponsible and undemocratic element of this legislation. Let us think for a moment. As a firearm owner, people would literally have to get arrested in order to challenge the reclassification of a firearm they may have owned for decades.

If this Liberal legislation has accomplished one thing, it has shown the need to establish clearly defined definitions of the criteria used to classify firearms. It also must be said that after reviewing all the expert witness testimony, not a single recommendation or amendment put forward by a firearms expert was accepted.

I cannot and will never support a piece of legislation that only goes after law-abiding firearms owners. There is little to nothing contained in this legislation that would crack down on criminals. Once again, the Liberals think that duck hunters and sport shooters are the problem.

While the government blindly passes this legislation, I will oppose it every step of the way. I will always stand up for law-abiding firearms owners and advocate for legislation that will actually make our streets and communities safer. Bill C-71 fails in this effort.

● (1940)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Pierre Nantel (Longueuil—Saint-Hubert, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I find this to be a very sensitive topic and I do not know a thing about firearms, but I would like to ask my colleague about his reaction to the firearm classification system. He said that people would have to get arrested in order to challenge the way a firearm is classified. Therefore, I do not understand how the Ruger Mini-14, the firearm used at École Polytechnique, is not restricted.

I understand that prohibited handguns must be in a case and have to be safely transported when driving to the firing range. This is all controlled. But I do not understand why someone would want to shoot a hail of bullets at a duck. It is just a waste of ammunition. I do not see the point.

How is it that such weapons can be of interest to sport shooters? Would my colleague help me understand that?

[*English*]

Mr. Larry Maguire: Mr. Speaker, in answer to my colleague's very sound question, as he probably heard in my presentation, the classification of a gun in many cases has been done on its visual aspects, what it looks like. In my comments I said very clearly that it should be based on the function and form of the gun, not the visual similarity to another type of a weapon. That is certainly true for these types of weapons. All guns should be referenced here and licensed according to the classification of the function of the particular gun.

Mr. Arnold Viersen (Peace River—Westlock, CPC): Mr. Speaker, one of the things I would like to point out with Bill C-71 is the fact that when it comes to firearms and when it comes to dealing with crime, the Liberals have it all backwards. If we look at Bill C-75 and Bill C-71 at the same time, we see that law-abiding Canadians, Canadians who are jumping through all the hoops that the Liberals put in place, are being punished by Bill C-71. However, when we look at Bill C-75, the so-called enhancements of the judicial system, we see that the Liberals are downgrading all of the sentencing for a lot of the crimes across Canada.

What does my colleague have to say about the complete lack of clarity between the two pieces of legislation?

● (1945)

Mr. Larry Maguire: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague for drawing the differences in these pieces of legislation so clearly in his question.

Here we are with legislation that we need to make sure we are going to classify by the form and function of a gun when we have legislation on the other side that would soften the sentence that criminals or gang members may get for acting illegally. It is telling that the Liberal government is bringing both of these bills forward under the auspices of trying to make it tougher on crime, when both bills would actually make it softer on crime. That is the similarity between the two, and it is unfortunate that the Liberals do not really tie in the fact, with Bill C-71, that this would not do anything to make it tougher for the criminals.

Mr. Glen Motz (Medicine Hat—Cardston—Warner, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the member for his involvement in filling in for us at committee on a number of occasions. He brought some great value to the work there. I wonder whether he could provide a commentary on some of the evidence that was heard from the experts who spoke to where Bill C-71 really fails Canadians.

Mr. Larry Maguire: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the member's comment in regard to my sitting in on a few of the sessions of the committee. The one that was most important to me was, as I pointed out, the one where Matthew Hipwell came as an expert in managing guns, having been in the RCMP for years but now in the business as well. He pointed out that many guns seem to be getting licensed because they have somewhat dropped into the same category as something else because they look similar.

I was very clear that firearms should not receive a classification based on their appearance. It has to be based on their form and function. That is the number one thing I learned from sitting in on some of those committee meetings. In some cases, that is not how guns are licensed today, but it should be.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Bernard Généreux (Montmagny—L'Islet—Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise to speak in the House today to represent my constituents in opposing Bill C-71, which is causing concern not only in my riding, but across Canada, especially the rural regions of Quebec.

Let me provide a brief history lesson. The former Liberal government of Jean Chrétien promised a gun registry in 1995 at a net cost of $2 million. He believed that it would cost only $119 million to implement it and he would collect $117 million in fees. Well, it took only seven years before the auditor general sounded the alarm in 2002, saying that the cost of this initiative had reached $1 billion. Two years later, it was valued at $2 billion. It went from $2 million to $2 billion.

That does not include the harm caused to thousands of hunters and farmers across the country, some of whom lived hundreds of kilometres from major centres and risked having their guns confiscated if their registrations or renewals were not done on time. That is when we noticed the disconnect between the Liberals and rural Canada and we still see it today. We had to wait for a Conservative government to make things right.

Let us be clear. The Conservatives support common sense gun control measures and the responsible use of firearms. It always has and it always will. In fact, it was a Conservative government that added the requirement for a firearms safety course to the national safety code in 1991. A Conservative government also amended the Criminal Code to include mandatory minimum sentences for firearms offences.

Let us not forget also that street gangs do not walk around with hunting rifles. That is the first thing. They like being discreet and they prefer handguns, which are already controlled and prohibited by law since 1934. Those criminals will continue buying their firearms on the black market, probably from the box of a pickup truck in some back alley in a large urban centre. This does not necessarily happen in the regions. Bill C-71 will not change that reality.

The Conservative government suspended the mandatory registration of long guns in 2006 and abolished the firearms registry in 2012 because it was costly and inefficient. Today, instead of looking forward and finding solutions to reduce the crime rate in Canada, the Liberals prefer to take us back to the 1990s by introducing Bill C-71.

First, they tell us that the bill does not include a registry, but the wording says that a retailer who sells a firearm must check the reference number with the registrar and record it in a system, where it must be kept for a period of 20 years. What is a registrar doing other than maintaining a registry? I am not sure how this translates into English, but in French, the word *enregistrement* includes the word *registre*. The word used in the English version of Bill C-71 is "registrar", which comes from the Latin *registrum*, meaning "registry".

● (1950)

[*English*]

As Jean Chrétien said, "A proof is a proof. What kind of a proof? It's a proof." The Prime Minister likes to say, "A Canadian is a Canadian is a Canadian." Well, a registrar is in charge of a registry.

[*Translation*]

They can claim that this registry will be simpler than the last, but there is still going to be a registry and they should not hide that fact. Unfortunately, that is exactly what the Liberals are doing. They are hiding the truth from us. The minister evidently recognized the lack of clarity of Bill C-71 when he introduced it on Monday, March 26, 2018. He indicated that there was no established standard for complying with the obligation to keep records for a mandatory period of 20 years. He recognized that certain small businesses still keep paper records. I can attest to that because I am a hunter. I am not a collector, but my son and I regularly exchange firearms, in accordance with the law and the rules, and the retailer who has sold us our guns still keeps paper records, which he will have to hold on to for 20 years.

Companies sometimes change owners, computer systems are changed sometimes every five years, and even tax documents are only kept for seven years. How did the minister decide on 20 years, which is three times longer? What are the penalties if the records are lost, misplaced, or destroyed as a result of a fire or technical malfunction?

Before introducing legislation, the government must ensure that it is complete.

Furthermore, Bill C-71 requires the owners of certain restricted firearms to call and request authorization to transport their firearm every time they leave home with it.

On March 26, 2018, here in the House, the minister said that owners could request authorization by phone or by Internet, and that the process would take about three to five minutes. However, there is no government office that can serve the public in three to five minutes.

The Auditor General criticized the Canada Revenue Agency, because it is almost impossible to get an agent on the line. Many have spoken out about similar situations of being stuck on hold for 15, 20, 40 minutes, or even longer, with employment insurance, immigration and citizenship, and other government agencies. The Liberals suddenly think that gun owners will be able to get someone on the line in less than five minutes. That is completely ridiculous.

Earlier, my colleague talked about how the Internet is not as fast in rural areas as it is in big cities. In my riding, there are some places where the Internet is not available at all. People have no way to access the Internet to get the PDFs. This will never work. Let's be realistic. Law-abiding people are going to get tired of waiting, and criminals who own illegal guns are not going to call the toll-free number to request permission to transport them.

With respect to privacy, the federal government is getting ready to transfer files from the old long gun registry to Quebec authorities that are trying to set up their own gun registry. Not only is the government doing that without the consent of the people involved, but it is also transferring information that has not been updated in a long time. Registration stopped being mandatory in 2006, which was almost 12 years ago, and the files have not been updated since the registry was abolished in 2012. The government is about to transfer files that have been out of date for six to 12 years.

I ask the Liberals across the aisle what guarantees the federal government obtained to ensure that Quebec's firearms registration service, or SIAF, is fully aware that this list is largely obsolete, and to ensure that Quebeckers do not end up in a situation where they have to prove that they genuinely no longer possess the firearm listed in the old registry or face fines ranging from $500 to $5,000.

Everything seems to point to the fact that this bill was hastily put together. Furthermore, instead of taking meaningful action to reduce crime in Canada, the government did the exact opposite by opposing mandatory sentences and consecutive sentences through Bill C-38.

I am not going to vote for a bill that will create more red tape for hunters in my rural riding and that has the potential of treating my law-abiding constituents as criminals.

Instead of trying to pass Bill C-71 before summer break, I urge the government to take a step back, listen to the concerns of rural residents, and withdraw Bill C-71 before the fall.

In conclusion, I can say that people in my riding are talking to me about this bill. I consulted my constituents and received tons of feedback, several dozen responses, in fact. Everyone is on our side. No one wants a registry, and yet, despite the government's claims, there will inevitably be a registry.

● (1955)

Mr. Pierre Nantel (Longueuil—Saint-Hubert, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his very clear speech. I understand that he was expressing the point of view of his constituents, which is certainly relevant.

I represent a suburb of Montreal, so I do not really face this reality on a regular basis. He talked about how he and his son exchange firearms, following all the rules of course. Since I am not an expert, I wanted to ask him what someone who is familiar with firearms would have to say regarding the firearms used in the most recent attacks. He was quite right that criminals carry small firearms that they trade in an alley in the back of a truck. However, the hoodlums who have shot people recently have done so with firearms that, I think, are available in sporting goods stores, with a gun licence. What do hunters have to say about that? The vast majority of Canadians use firearms to hunt, which is an entirely noble activity. How do hunters react when they see hoodlums shooting all over the place with firearms that should never be sold freely?

Mr. Bernard Généreux: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his question.

I almost feel like returning the question and asking him what he thinks of the hoodlums who drive around and use a car or van to kill dozens of people, as was the case in Toronto recently. The principle is the same. The problem is in those people's heads; it is not the firearms themselves. Some people collect firearms, just as other people collect other everyday items or trinkets. I do not think that is the problem. On top of that, people who use firearms to commit crimes are often deranged, as we have seen on many occasions.

[*English*]

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have a very quick comment and a question.

It continues to be concerning that the Conservative Party wants to insist that this is about a gun registry, when we know that this is not about a gun registry. Even Conservatives have said that. When the bill went to committee, they even moved an amendment to that effect, which was supported by all parties. However, that does not fit the Conservative narrative. They want to continue to mislead Canadians, and that is entirely up to the Conservative Party.

The specific question I have for the member is this: Does he believe that individuals in society should be able to have a restricted weapon in their trunk or on their back seat wherever they want to go? From the Conservative Party's perspective, do these individuals have any responsibility to at least make a notification that they are driving around, or should they be able to just drive around with a restricted weapon?

[*Translation*]

Mr. Bernard Généreux: Mr. Speaker, I would like to come back to something my colleague said earlier. We see less of these in Quebec, but the rest of Canada holds what are called gun shows. People who own firearms gather together in villages, municipalities, usually very small communities and bring their firearms. That means they are transporting their firearms from one place to another. Imagine the situation. Before leaving home, these people have to contact the department by telephone or Internet to get a document that will allow them to bring their firearm to a gun show. That is just one example.

Obviously, that is just red tape on red tape, an administrative burden that most people do not need. Someone responded earlier that this will affect less than 10% of people. Why have a rule for 10% of the population? What about the 90% of law-abiding people who have no issue? Why pass legislation for only 10% of the population?

I think that people obey the law, particularly hunters, those who collect firearms, and people who take their firearms to gun shows to show them off to others with the same passion. We must not forget that these are passionate, law-abiding citizens.

● (2000)

[*English*]

Mr. Arnold Viersen (Peace River—Westlock, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to stand this evening to discuss Bill C-71. It is a bill that is going to change the Firearms Act, and Canadians do not trust the Liberals when it comes to firearms. That is abundantly clear.

One of the things I want to draw into this debate is Bill C-75, which is a bill the government is bringing in to change sentencing for a multitude of crimes in Canada. What are the Liberals doing in that bill? They are reducing the sentences for over 27 significant crimes. One of the crimes they are reducing them for is participation in a terrorist plot. They are reducing the sentence.

Why are the Liberals doing this? It is because they have a "hug a thug" theory that if we would just like terrorists better, they would not perpetrate terrorism against our country. We have seen this on display already. They have given $10.5 million to a terrorist named Omar Khadr. They are now reducing their crimes and have given citizenship back to terrorists.

Canadians do not trust the government when it comes to getting it right. When the Liberals come out with firearms legislation that they say is going to reduce crime, Canadians do not believe them. They say that their track record up to this point has been to reduce sentences, not to reduce crime. We have seen a dramatic increase in crime across Canada.

I was in Toronto earlier this month and met with people who said that break and enters were up in their community. In my community, we have seen rural crime up significantly across all parts of Alberta and Saskatchewan. When the Liberals introduced Bill C-71 and said that this was going to reduce violent crime and gun crime, Canadians looked at the government and said, "Really?" Nothing it has done up to this point has reduced crime whatsoever, and now we are supposed to expect that suddenly, with Bill C-71, the Liberals are going to reduce crime.

What would the bill do? Would it increase sentences for criminals? Would it ensure that if a firearm was used in a crime there would be more restrictions? If weapons were smuggled in from another country, would that change anything? Would it enhance border security? No, it would not do any of that.

What would it do? It would target the people who already have a firearms licence. People who have a firearms licence would now be required to go through an extra hurdle, an extra hoop to jump through, and call whenever they transferred a firearm.

Where I come from, firearms are a fact of life. Typically, every household has a number of firearms. It is just the way the world works where I come from. Firearms are exchanged on a regular basis. There are entire Facebook pages committed to exchanging firearms. Someone says, "I have a firearm. Come and check it out."

The Liberals rolled out this legislation and said that we do not even have to show a firearms licence to get a firearm in Canada. That is news to me, a firearms owner who has a firearms licence. I need to show my possession acquisition licence, my PAL, every time. I have never gone to buy ammunition and forgotten my PAL and asked to have it sold to me. They have to see my licence before they sell me any ammunition.

The criminals who robbed my local firearms store certainly did not show their PAL. They just broke in and stole the firearms. That is what we are dealing with.

With this particular piece of legislation, I would have to make a phone call to ensure that my PAL was up to date. It says right on my PAL whether it has expired. That should be good enough. When I renew it, I have to fill out all the paperwork again. Once every five years, I have to fill out the paperwork again. They phone my wife to make sure that she is okay with me having firearms. Every time I renew, I have to fill out my wife's contact information, her email address, etc.

An hon. member: Is she okay with it?

Mr. Arnold Viersen: The member is heckling me asking if my wife is okay with it. She is definitely okay with it.

● (2005)

Let me tell the House, those firearms put food on the table at my house. Every other year, I typically get a moose in the freezer, and a white-tailed deer or two, as well. That is definitely what we are using those firearms for.

I use firearms for other things as well. I do not know about anyone else, but there are not many things that are more exciting on a Friday night than going to a buddy's house, throwing a few skeets in the air, and taking them down with a shotgun. That is a lot of fun. I am not sure if the Speaker has ever participated in that, but that is a lot of fun.

This particular legislation targets people like that, people who just want to hang out on a Friday night and shoot some clay pigeons out at the gravel pit. I want one of those new Benelli shotguns. I am not sure if members have seen them but they are amazing. However, now if I want to sell my shotgun to my brother, who has a PAL, and he can show it to me and I can make sure the date on it is good, I will now have to call the RCMP to make sure that the card I am looking at, that has a date on it, that says it is still good, is actually still good. I will have to call in there, and he is going to have to call in as well.

What sense does that make? All that does is it makes life more miserable for firearms owners. That is what we are looking at with this piece of legislation. It is not so much about reducing crime; it is not going after gangsters or drug dealers in urban centres. This is going after firearms owners. This is trying to reduce the number of firearms in the country, just for ideological reasons.

I know that the Liberal government is only worried about reducing the number of firearms because, at committee, the Liberals were layering requirements on legal firearms owners, firearms dealers, and firearms stores, making sure that they keep records for 20 years, make all these phone calls, and register all these transactions.

This is registry. Whether or not a firearm is being registered or the transaction is being registered, the government is keeping tabs on the firearms in this country. Given all of that, I know that the only thing this bill is there to do is to reduce the number of firearms in this country. At committee, we moved an amendment to change the date on which the bill would come into effect. The date that this bill comes into effect is June 30, 2018, a week from now.

I do not think that this bill will be passed into law by June 30. However, that is the date in the bill. We expect that this bill will probably be passed into law sometime in the fall. We said that we wanted to make an amendment to change that to "whenever the bill comes into law". The Liberals said no, they could not change that date. The date is June 30, and if the bill comes into law much later in the future, that date still has to be used.

That is so that we reduce the number of firearms that will come in under the exemption that is going to be in place after this bill is passed. The Liberals explicitly say that they want to reduce the number of firearms that come into this country. That is what this bill is all about. It is reducing the right of Canadians to bear arms. It is reducing the right of Canadians to buy firearms.

My NDP colleague over here always asks why people need a particular firearm. I am not a stamp collector. I know nothing about stamps. I take my hat off to those people who are stamp collectors. I ask them all the time why they need a particular stamp. They have lots of good reasons why they need a particular stamp. I think, well, all the power to them.

I have friends who are that way with firearms. They never use them. They have them sitting in their collection. When I go over to their house, they open the door on their gun case and say, "Check this out. Look at the new firearm I just bought. Is it not amazing?" I ask what they are ever going to use it for, and they say they are not going to use them, they just think they are cool. That is the same way for a lot of our firearms owners. They just want to be able to show that they have the coolest firearm on the planet Earth. They do not intend to use it. They just want to have that firearm in their collection. I do not necessarily understand it, just like I do not understand the stamp collector.

I think it is a right of Canadians to own property that brings them enjoyment.

● (2010)

Mr. Francis Drouin (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I really enjoyed my colleague's speech, but there are some nuances we have heard on this side of the House, and one of them is that the bill has nothing to do with gangs and guns in our cities. I want to take him back to a moment in 2017, when the Minister of Public Safety announced $100 million to fight guns and gangs in our cities. What did the party opposite do? It voted against it, not once, but multiple times.

The Conservatives advertise that this is a backdoor gun registry, which we know is false. Any farmers or hunters are not going to feel the pain of an application. They are not going to feel the pain of a test. They are not going to feel the pain of any extra costs to do what they have been doing every single day. Why is the Conservative Party of Canada collecting data on law-abiding citizens of Canada who own guns?

Mr. Arnold Viersen: Mr. Speaker, the Liberals are continually going on the record saying that this is not a federal gun registry, and yet the bill takes the data from the old long-gun registry, which sat with the courts until the Liberals came into power and the courts handed it back to them. It makes a provision in the law to allow the Province of Quebec to gain access to the entire former federal gun registry. If that is not a federal gun registry, I do not know what is.

Mr. Don Davies (Vancouver Kingsway, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I sat through the very passionate debates about the gun registry in the House, and I want to remind everyone that often these debates have certain real-life underpinnings. One was the École Polytechnique massacre. There are other cases around the country where people who should not have had guns got their hands on them and real people died.

I thought the comparison my hon. colleague made between stamps and guns was an inappropriate one for the very obvious reason that guns are objects that can do serious damage and kill. I do not think any philatelist has ever killed anyone with his or her stamp collection.

I do realize that there is a wide variety of perspectives on gun ownership in our country. We are a big country. What might be an appropriate position in a rural area where there are farmers and hunters is a very different thing from that in an urban riding, like the one I represent. This chamber should represent that diversity of views.

What would my hon. colleague propose would be good legislation that would be directed at keeping guns out of the hands of criminals and gangs that should not have them, as opposed to legislation like this, which is meant to tighten up regulations so that we ensure responsible gun owners in this country are complying with the rules and that police, in particular, have a tracking system so they can track guns, and those who should not have guns do not get them?

Mr. Arnold Viersen: Mr. Speaker, my best proposal is there just would be no criminals in our country. That would make everything a whole lot easier.

One of the things that would work better is to ensure that our border security is a little tighter, ensure police have the proper resources to do their work, but also just create a culture where we all understand how firearms work and how they are used in this country.

One of the things the Liberals said right out of the gate is that people do not have to show their licence in order to purchase firearms or ammunition. That is patently false. I would ask my hon. colleague what he sees in this particular bill that would do anything to keep firearms out of the hands of criminals. What would help a great deal is to ensure that the black market is not full of firearms.

● (2015)

Mrs. Rosemarie Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise tonight to speak to Bill C-71, an act to amend certain acts and regulations in relation to firearms.

This legislation would have an impact on many of my constituents who are law-abiding gun owners. In fact, this legislation would have a big impact on many Canadians.

Hunting is a big part of the livelihood, traditions, and recreational choices of a significant number of Canadians. Some Canadians also own firearms to protect their crops, livestock, or themselves from rabid animals, and animals like bears or coyotes. Others enjoy competing in recreational shooting sports and some are collectors. Whether they are hunters, farmers, sport shooters, or collectors, what these Canadians can be certain about is that Bill C-71 would result in greater unnecessary restrictions.

I do want to be clear that public safety should always be the priority of any government. Safe and sensible firearm policies are necessary to ensure public safety. Mandatory firearm safety courses, safe storage and transportation measures, and licensing are all common sense measures that contribute to public safety in Canada, measures law-abiding gun owners follow already. Under the guise of tackling gun violence and keeping firearms out of the hands of criminals, the Liberal government has brought forward Bill C-71.

The Liberal government's rhetoric is deceiving. A review of this legislation quickly reveals that the Liberals have completely missed the mark. This legislation would do nothing to address gangs, gun violence, and escalating crime rates in our rural communities. Instead, it would target law-abiding gun owners. It would treat Canadians who legally own firearms as criminals. In fact, a measure in this legislation has the potential of inadvertently making criminals of Canadian men and women who have legally purchased a firearm.

The Liberals are repealing parts of the Common Sense Firearms Licensing Act. Specifically, the bill would put the ability to classify weapons solely back in the hands of RCMP bureaucrats, meaning the legislation we have before us would allow the RCMP to prohibit a firearm without notice. That could result in the confiscation of a firearm that was legally purchased and the owner could then be subject to criminal charges.

In 2014, unelected bureaucrats decided to reclassify Swiss Arms rifles and CZ 858 rifles. They were reclassified as prohibited, making it illegal to import, buy, sell, or own them. These rifles had been legal in Canada for years and many responsible law-abiding gun owners had purchased these rifles legally, but the decision to prohibit them turned these lawful gun owners into criminals in possession of prohibited firearms.

Our former Conservative government enacted common sense legislation that restored the property rights to these individuals. It created an appropriate balance, where based on expert advice, the government makes the rules and the RCMP interprets and enforces them.

Another measure that this legislation repeals is the authorization to transport a firearm to specific routine and lawful activities. The Common Sense Firearms Licensing Act automatically gave individuals with a licence authorization to transport their firearm to a shooting range, a police station, a chief firearms officer, a gunsmith, a gun store, a gun show, a border point, and home from the place of purchase. As indicated in the act, this measure was common sense. It removed unnecessary red tape.

Bill C-71 would repeal these measures. It would only allow for a firearm to travel to a shooting range or home from a place of purchase. Any other of the aforementioned activities would require a specific authorization to transport, issued at the discretion of the province's chief firearms officer.

● (2020)

Issuing authorizations to transport firearms to routine locations, like a gunsmith for repair or to the chief firearms officer for verification or registration, is unnecessary. It in no way addresses the criminal element behind gun violence.

Let us talk about the real elephant in the room tonight. This legislation is a backdoor attempt to bring back the wasteful and ineffective long-gun registry. The long-gun registry introduced by Chrétien's Liberal government was costly. Canadians were told it would only cost them $2 million, but in the end it cost more than $2 billion, and for what purpose? It was ineffective. There is no evidence that the long-gun registry prevented any crime in Canada. It seems that criminals and gang members never took the time to fill out the necessary paperwork. And there is no evidence that the new registry would be any different.

I admit that the Liberals have said that this legislation does not reintroduce a firearms registry. At the committee stage, they even voted in favour of a Conservative amendment denouncing any effort to re-establish a registry of non-restricted firearms. However, by now we all know that what the Liberals say and what they do are often very different.

The Liberals are said to be tackling crime through this legislation, but words like "gang" or "criminal organization" are not found in the text of the bill. What we do find are words like "registrar", "registration", "records", and "reference number". That is because this legislation creates a registry of non-restricted firearms. Bill C-71 would require firearm retailers to create and manage a registry of licensed non-restricted firearms buyers, which is a registry they would need to surrender to the chief firearms officer upon request. People would also require permission from the RCMP registrar of firearms to buy, sell, give, or loan a non-restricted rifle.

This begs the question that I know many of my colleagues on this side of the House have asked. What does a registrar do? The answer is quite simple: a registrar keeps a registry. The Liberals are using a federal registrar to keep records on non-restricted firearms. This is the "2.0" version of a federal firearms registry.

Canadians want safe and sensible firearms legislation, but that is simply not what the Liberals have offered them. Instead, they are creating more unnecessary red tape for law-abiding Canadians. They are casting suspicion on law-abiding firearms owners, while doing nothing to address the criminal element behind gun violence. Their priorities are backwards.

This is made only more evident when we consider Bill C-75, another bill introduced by the government. Bill C-75 lessens the sentences for serious and violent crimes to sentences as little as a fine. Some of the crimes that would be eligible for lighter sentencing under this legislation include participating in a terrorist activity, activities relating to human trafficking, kidnapping, forced marriage, or impaired driving causing bodily harm. These are very serious crimes. The punishment should fit the crime. A fine is not the appropriate sentence for these crimes and it is insulting to victims.

The Liberals are weakening the Canadian criminal justice system and making light of serious crimes. At the same time, they are sending a strong message to law-abiding gun owners by treating them like criminals.

I cannot support legislation that does nothing to address gangs, gun violence, and the escalating crime rates in rural communities. I cannot support legislation that enacts a backdoor firearms registry, and unnecessarily burdens law-abiding Canadians with regulations.

Bill C-71 is flawed legislation because it does not take appropriate action to prevent or deter gun violence. It burdens law-abiding Canadian citizens with red tape and villainizes my constituents who are hunters, farmers, and sport shooters.

● (2025)

When it comes down to it, the Liberals have again proven that they cannot be trusted to bring forward sensible and effective firearms legislation.

Mrs. Alaina Lockhart (Parliamentary Secretary for Small Business and Tourism, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as members know, I represent Fundy Royal in New Brunswick, a largely rural area. Through the course of this discussion on Bill C-71, I have taken the opportunity to consult with many firearms owners in my riding, to understand their concerns and to feed their concerns back into this legislative process, which I found to be a very productive exercise.

Has the member across the way consulted with any domestic violence victims advocates, or with any women's groups or youth? Youth, in particular, are now in the habit of having to regularly practise lockdowns in their schools. The reality is that, even though they live in rural areas, gun regulation is very important for them. Can the hon. member share with us the consultation that she has done with other groups in her riding?

Mrs. Rosemarie Falk: Mr. Speaker, I find that question quite interesting. Again, I live in rural Canada, in Saskatchewan. Every person I have spoken to who is a law-abiding firearm owner takes the measures that he or she needs to take, by storing it safely under lock and key. These people have licences. People I have consulted with have said that the current Liberal government is not listening to them and to the concerns they have, and they do not appreciate taking nine-to-five Ottawa to rural Canada.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Pierre Nantel (Longueuil—Saint-Hubert, NDP): Mr. Speaker, we all hope that this is one of the last debates in the House tonight. I am pleasantly surprised because we are having an interesting conversation about the varying realities across Canada's different regions.

I understand that my colleague is opposing what might be seen as a registry. If someone said that all semi-automatic weapons were prohibited and therefore not readily available, I would think that an easing of the rules is possible.

Does my colleague think that firearms users would understand that firearms which can shoot multiple rounds from a magazine need to be prohibited and not be available for unrestricted sale? If those firearms were not available for sale, would a registry still be necessary?

[*English*]

Mrs. Rosemarie Falk: Mr. Speaker, that is not what this is, though. We have a piece of legislation that is not addressing gangs and criminals, the people who are stealing these weapons. As I said, and I will reiterate, law-abiding gun owners have their guns under lock and key, so they are not easily attained. It is not fair to punish law-abiding citizens when they are doing what they need to do. What the government needs to do is look at how it can combat gun violence by gangs, in urban and rural areas. I have a rural area where we also have gang violence. It is not fair for the government to punish law-abiding gun owners. The firearms owners I have been speaking to in my riding are not happy with this whatsoever, and they cannot wait until the day in 2019 when this gets repealed.

● (2030)

Mr. Glen Motz (Medicine Hat—Cardston—Warner, CPC): Mr. Speaker, let us summarize some of the key issues I have heard from Canadians all across the country, including the nearly 79,000 who have signed the e-petition, stating that they are opposed to Bill C-71.

First, the proposed bill does nothing to tackle gun, gang or rural crime. Criminals do not register their firearms as we know.

Second, the claims made by the public safety minister, his parliamentary secretary, the Prime Minister, and the rest of the Liberals that the bill goes after criminals while respecting firearms owners are inaccurate and insulting to millions of Canadians.

Third, the Liberals will not call this a gun registry. The rest of the country thinks that it is a gun registry. I guess we will have to leave it to Canadians to decide when they vote in the next election.

We saw what the Liberal MPs really thought of Bill C-71 when we finished our work at committee. Mere moments after ratifying the legislation at committee, with the Liberal majority against the Conservative objectives, the Liberals moved to call a study on issues raised precisely by witnesses, just minutes after stifling Conservative amendments that would have improved Bill C-71.

The Liberals called on the minister to address the real issues facing illegal firearms getting into the hands of criminals; administrative and process issues resulting in criminals getting firearms licences; and improving regulations on firearms storage for retailers and firearms owners. All of these issues are more productive than anything the minister has put forward, and none of the MPs on that committee had the courage to tackle these issues in the legislation when that bill was before us at committee and when they had the chance.

It is time the Liberal government start to take public safety and its duty to protect Canadians seriously. However, it is not taking these issues as seriously as it needs to. Rather, it is targeting law-abiding gun owners and delaying funding for police.

In the fall of 2017, the public safety minister made an announcement in Surrey, B.C., where there is a real gang problem. Gang violence and shootings are a regular occurrence there, and police and communities need more help to tackle these criminals. At that time, he promised $327 million to combat gangs and guns. It was a great announcement, and no doubt one that helped the Liberal MP from South Surrey—White Rock secure his seat since it was made during the by-election.

To date, not one dollar has moved on that funding. Reports suggest it will take a full two more years for the Liberals to make that funding available to police. Since that announcement, the Liberals have tabled Bill C-71, pushing the House by limiting debate and testimony, and ramming it through with almost no amendments, despite nearly every witness saying it was not a good bill.

Looking at the Liberal motions that followed the four days of study on Bill C-71, we saw that the Liberal MPs had little to no understanding of the subject matter, were confused by the current laws, and made little or no attempt to fix the problems that were clearly presented to the committee. The Liberals suggested, again, after the study had been completed, that the minister review the reference process for possession and acquisition licences.

We heard from a Liberal insider who testified, very passionately, about the tragic loss of her daughter. Her killer was described as a non-violent boyfriend but "manipulative and controlling". He had a firearms licence and legally purchased at least one of the guns that he shot her daughter with. The witness stated that he had an arrest for drug trafficking, forcible confinement, assault, uttering threats, and received only two years probation. To be clear, this individual should never have been granted a firearms licence and was in no way eligible for one with the charges and convictions against him. It was human error that caused this to occur, not a gap in legislation.

Section 5 of the Firearms Act, as it was back then and is now, states, "A person is not eligible to hold a licence if it is desirable, in the interests of the safety of that or any other person, that the person not possess a firearm". Further, it says that if individuals have been "convicted or discharged under section 730 of the Criminal Code", which is anyone convicted of an offence, they are ineligible for a firearm.

It also states that anyone convicted of "an offence in the commission of which violence against another person was used, threatened or attempted", and, "an offence relating to the contravention...of the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act" is ineligible.

● (2035)

Moreover anyone who "has a history of behaviour that includes violence or threatened or attempted violence" is also ineligible to legally acquire a licence to obtain a firearm. That is what the legislation is currently and was before Bill C-71 was introduced. The bill specifically dealt with this section.

Clause 2 proposed amendments to section 5, so it was certainly in the scope of the bill. In fact, clause 2 was one of the few areas where any amendments were made. The committee agreed that we amend clause 2 to include language that anyone who "...has a history of behaviour that includes violence or threatened or attempted violence or threatening conduct on the part of the person against any person" or who "for any reason, poses a risk of harm to any person" is ineligible for a firearm licence. To be blunt, not much changed.

The Liberals on committee felt so strongly about this issue of reference checks that they decided to call no new witnesses and hold no added meetings. They made no call for the minister to increase resources to ensure a thorough review of reference checks.

The Liberals also called for the government to examine firearms storage and commercial storage regulations. This is ironic, since the Liberals blocked industry representatives from coming to committee. As with numerous cases during the testimony, this recommendation makes it crystal clear that the Liberal MPs who voted for Bill C-71 still have no idea what the current laws and rules are around firearms in this country.

Here are the rules as per government regulations for storage for non-restricted firearms. They must be unloaded, must be locked in a room that is hard to break into, or have a trigger lock so that they cannot be fired. Ammunition must be stored separately and locked.

For a restricted firearm, like the sidearm I used for policing, it must be unloaded, must have a trigger lock, and be locked in a room or safe that cannot be easily opened.

Ironically, the motion calls for the government to work with all relevant stakeholders, something it did not apparently think was important enough to do during the legislation. Seven of the individuals the minister says were consulted in preparation for Bill C-71 stated that they were not consulted at all, contrary to the minister's suggestion.

The Liberals finally called for the minister to look into straw purchases and that, "the Government study mechanisms to identify large and unusual firearms transactions, especially those involving restricted and prohibited guns, to better identify illicit straw purchasing schemes, gang activity, or trafficking operations".

I find it funny, that the minister stated that Bill C-71 would deal with this issue. He said it would help police trace guns used in crimes, detect straw purchasing schemes, and identify trafficking networks. However it does not. The Liberals are now calling for it. It is clear that even though Liberal MPs voted for this in committee, they did not even believe their own minister.

The fact is that while some of the suggestions from the Liberals might have merit, they ring hollow. We had an opportunity and an obligation to go after illegal firearms, gangs, and violent crime when the bill came to committee. Sadly, the Liberals lacked the courage of their convictions and passed a pointless bill, a bill they ironically gave so little credence to that they immediately moved to do other things after voting in favour of it.

Bill C-71 would not increase the safety of our communities. It would not combat gangs and illegal firearms, because criminals do not register their guns. It would not provide new tools for police or more resources to deal with the issues. And for my colleagues in the Liberal party, it would not provide any added political cover in the next election.

● (2040)

Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, at the beginning of my colleague's speech he talked about this being a registry, and we have heard this time and time again coming from the opposition. I would offer to the House that is nothing more than a red herring.

The Conservatives do not have an argument and do not have a solid position on this issue. Time and time again they suggest that this is a registry when they know full well that it is not. Do not take my word for it though. Let us return to the member for Red Deer—Lacombe who said in committee, "everybody at this table agrees that this is not a registry".

In the context of being in committee where people can talk freely and have a discussion about this, members of the Conservative Party are saying that and then they come into the House and insist it is a registry.

Is the member now suggesting that the member for Red Deer—Lacombe was incorrect and that he was wrong when he said it is not a registry? Or are the Conservatives just coming here with their talking points because they have no other argument against this legislation? Is that the more plausible thing?

Mr. Glen Motz: Mr. Speaker, I was dreaming of this question. I thank the member for asking it. Typical for the Liberal Party, that quote was taken completely out of context. I was right beside the member for Red Deer—Lacombe. It is a quote.

What is really interesting is that the Liberals can say whatever they want in clause 2 of this act, and then throughout the rest of the bill, they continue to act as if the bill is a registry. They keep reference numbers there. They keep the whole context of "registrar" and "registry". It is not what we think. Tens of thousands of Canadians, who have already voiced their disapproval of this bill, still consider it to be a gun registry. Canadians have heard the rhetoric of the Liberal Party before. They could not be trusted before, and they certainly cannot be trusted now. We will wait and see.

This bill is pointless. It has nothing to do with the real issues of guns and gangs. We do not need any lessons from the Liberal Party on what Canadians know is best for them when it comes to gun legislation.

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, I am disappointed, because I found the member for Medicine Hat—Cardston—Warner so reasonable in his approach when we were at committee working on clause by clause. However, I find the ramped-up partisan rhetoric on this bill to be really dispiriting.

This bill was never intended to take on gangs. Gang violence is another issue. It is related, but it is not the same thing. We have talked at committee about my own experience. It happens that a member of my family is very involved in this and is actually a prosecuting lawyer within the B.C. task force on organized crime and dealing with gang crime.

This is about tightening up the restrictions on who can own a firearm. This is a fact. It is not an invented thing at this hour of debate. It is clear that this bill extends the background check from five years to a lifetime. I think the hon. member for Medicine Hat—Cardston—Warner sees the sense in that. It is really important that we actually look at a history of violence, even if it goes back more than five years, that we look at the risks to intimate partners if someone has ever had access to a gun or made a threat that falls short of what is currently in the act.

He is right. What is in the current firearms act covers a lot of things, but it does not cover when an intimate partner has had to get a restraining order against someone who has threatened his or her life. Therefore, I ask the hon. member to be honourable and to admit that this bill has benefits for public safety.

Mr. Glen Motz: Mr. Speaker, I appreciated the hon. member's accuracy at committee as we were going through amendments.

The reality is that currently, before Bill C-71 came along, criminal record checks and background checks for people applying for a licence did not go back five years. We heard from those who actually do these checks that they go back over the lifetime of the individual when they apply for a PAL. The suggestion that they only go back five years is mistaken.

Is there a need to improve the inability of people to access firearms who have a record or mental health issues? Absolutely. It was the Conservative Party that was the first to bring in prohibitions, the removal of licences, and the removal of firearms from those who are convicted or accused of domestic violence.

I appreciate the hon. member's question. The current legislation is void. There are some steps to be made. I think, however, that this bill does not do it, as required by Canadians, for public safety.

● (2045)

Mr. Kelly McCauley (Edmonton West, CPC): Mr. Speaker, "a rose by any other name would smell as sweet" is a popular reference to William Shakespeare's play *Romeo and Juliet*, in which Juliet seems to argue that it does matter that Romeo is from her family's rival house of Montague and that he is a Montague himself. The reference is often used to imply that the names of things do not affect what they really are. Juliet compares Romeo to a rose, saying that if he was not named Romeo, he would be just as handsome and would still be Juliet's love.

In the case of Bill C-71, a gun registry by any other name is, well, a gun registry.

At committee stage, the Liberals passed one of the CPC amendments, which has been often quoted. It stated, "For greater certainty, nothing in this Act shall be construed so as to permit or require the registration of non-restricted firearms."

When the Liberals adopted this amendment, we expected that they would also support changes that would remove the elements that essentially created a gun registry. Unfortunately, they did not. They kept the registrar tracking of the transfer of firearms, keeping a centralized government record, and that is a registry by another name.

It is very cynical and disingenuous of the Minister of Public Safety and other Liberals in the House to try to skew this as support for the language of the bill. It was much like watching the President of the Treasury Board the other day defending the Liberals' slush fund in vote 40 in the estimates by quoting the current and the past PBO, pretending these gentlemen were in support of the Liberal slush fund. However, Kevin Page, the former PBO, said that there is no way it is an improvement, and the current PBO said that their incomplete information will lead to weaker spending controls.

The bill before us would remove the reference to the five-year period that applies to background checks on licence applications, thereby eliminating any temporal restrictions on such checks. It would require that whenever a non-restricted firearm is transferred, the buyer must produce a licence, and the vendor must verify that it is valid, which would require a registrar to issue a reference number for such transactions. The bill would require commercial retailers to maintain records of their inventories and sales, and such records would be accessible to the police. It would put the power to classify weapons in the hands of the RCMP bureaucrats and take it out of the hands of parliamentarians, and it would amend the Long-gun Registry Act to allow a province to keep its gun registry records. It sounds like a registry.

What is missing from Bill C-71 is any reference to keeping guns out of the hands of criminals and gangs.

What bill does mention gangs and organized crime? Bill C-75 does, but only in relation to lighter sentences. What does Bill C-75 do? It lessens sentences to as little as fines for those participating in the activity of a terrorist group, much like the returning ISIS terrorist wandering around the streets of Toronto. If the government ever gets around to having him arrested, maybe we will hit him with a fine.

The penalty for administering a noxious drug, such as a date rape drug, can now be reduced to a fine. The penalty for advocating genocide is now reduced. It is somewhat ironic that the Liberals would use the word "genocide" in Bill C-75 for reducing the penalty, when they could not bear to say the word in the House to describe what was happening to the Yazidis overseas. The penalty for participating in organized crime would also be reduced in Bill C-75.

To sum up, Bill C-71 would go after law-abiding gun owners, and Bill C-75 would go soft on crime. Maybe we will set out some tea cozies and ask returning ISIS fighters to sit around the campfire and sing *Kumbaya* together.

To make the streets safer, I have to ask why the Minister of Public Safety does not just get up from his seat, walk about seven benches down, and tell the Minister of Justice to do her job and appoint some judges to the judiciary. In the Jordan ruling, people have a right to a timely trial, but the Liberals have not appointed enough judges, so we are letting accused murderers go. I want to talk about some of them.

Nick Chan, from Calgary, walked free this week. Who is Nick Chan? He was charged with first-degree murder, conspiracy to commit murder, and instructing a criminal organization. If the Liberals want to get guns off the street, why do they not appoint judges so that we can keep people like Nick Chan in jail? He has also been accused in the past of murdering three other people and has been charged with firearm offences. Here we have Bill C-71 going after law-abiding gun owners, and we let someone like Nick Chan, who is charged with illegally possessing guns, go because we have not appointed judges.

James Coady, in Newfoundland, facing drug trafficking and weapons charges, was let go because there was no judge and he could not get a timely trial.

● (2050)

Van Son Nguyen was released in Quebec, the third accused murderer released in Quebec because he could not get a timely trial.

Lance Regan was released in Edmonton because, again, no judges.

However, let us focus on Bill C-71. Here is the worst one. A father was accused of breaking his two-week-old baby's ankles. He had his criminal charges stayed because he could not get a timely trial. The grandmother of the poor kid said, "We were angry, we were crying, we were outraged that he was able to get off with this (ruling)."

However, the Liberal government is tying us up with Bill C-71, going after law-abiding gun owners and ignoring its duty to appoint judges, letting murders go free, letting someone who breaks the ankles of a two-week-old baby go free. This is the priority.

In a television interview, the parliamentary secretary for justice said, "We border the largest handgun arsenal in the world." I assume he means America. However, this bill would do nothing to address that issue.

The Minister of Public Safety says, "it's the drug trade, in particular, that is an intrinsic part of gang culture and gang-related violence and arguably causes the most harm in our communities" and that it is made worse by the "opioid crisis". What do we have? Vote 40, the slush fund, which is supposed to get money out the door faster, has $1 million to address the opioid issue.

I want to talk about the departmental plans. Departmental plans are plans that every department has to put out. The departmental reports describe departmental priorities and expected results.

I will go to the Minister of Public Safety and see what his plan says, "If we can find a way to intervene early before tragedy strikes, we should." Here is a hint for the Minister of Public Safety. He should walk down the row and tell the justice minister to appoint some judges and then maybe we can intervene before tragedy strikes.

He talks about safer communities being central to Public Safety Canada's mandate. He invites all Canadians to read the Public Safety Canada 2018-19 departmental plan to find out how it is keeping Canada and Canadians safe.

I have read the plans. I do not think anyone from the other side of the House has, and I am pretty sure the Minister of Public Safety has not read his own plans that he signed off on.

Under the section on national security and terrorism, it sets out four different targets. Departmental results indicate that the first one is Canada's ranking on global terrorism. I am surprised the government has not even set a target to compare things to. The next is Canada's ranking on cyber security, but there are no past areas to compare it to. Then the percentage of the population thinks the right mechanisms are in place for them to respond to terrorism. Once again, there is no target set. It goes on and on.

Under community public safety, and this is great, there are seven targets, three of them have no past targets to refer to. Therefore, the government is pulling a number out of the air as the target to achieve. For the percentage of stakeholders reported consulting public safety, the target is set at 60%. However, there is nothing in the past to compare it to. For stakeholders reporting good or very good results on projects funded through Public Safety, it is 80%. Compared to what? Nothing, everything is not applicable. Here is a great one. The crime severity index is going to go up. This measures, as it says, the severity of crime in Canada. This actually goes up over last year and up over the Harper era.

For the percentage of Canadians who think that crime in their neighbourhood has decreased, the goal for next year is to have it worse than it was in previous years. For crimes prevented in populations most at risk, it shows a drop in results. For the percentage of at-risk populations, there is no target. For the difference between police reporting in first nations communities, again, it shows a drop in results. The three-year plan actually shows 23% in funding cuts to community safety.

This shows the Liberal priorities. Instead of going after terrorists, instead of going after criminals, instead of going after gangs with guns, their priority is to prey on law-abiding gun owners and re-establishing a registry. It is a shame.

● (2055)

Mr. John Brassard (Barrie—Innisfil, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my hon. colleague for his very passionate and fact-filled speech on Bill C-71. One of the interesting aspects of this that has been touched on many times today as we have debated the bill is how little mention there is, in fact zero mention, of guns and gangs in the bill, but the words "registry" and "registrar" are mentioned many times. In fact, I think it was 38 times in this legislation.

Why does my hon. colleague think that is? Why are there so many mentions of registrar and register, yet zero mention of guns and gangs? Is this in fact a registry?

Mr. Kelly McCauley: Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned earlier, a rose by any other name would smell just as sweet. A registry by any other name would still be a registry. If we look at the definition of the word "registrar", it says the official responsible for keeping a registry for official records. It is very clearly a registry.

The member also talked about the lack of addressing crime. In the Liberals' budget, they stated they were going to put aside $253 million immediately for addressing gun crime and then $100 million a year after that. That money does not show up in the estimates. When we look at the promise for Statistics Canada, the Liberals are spending just as much to reinstate the long-form census as they stated they were going to spend on preventing guns from getting into the hands of criminals.

Again it goes to the Liberals' priorities, a long-form census and another form of registry are more important than actually keeping guns out of the hands of criminals. It is all very liberal.

Mr. John Brassard (Barrie—Innisfil, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is a privilege to rise today and the hon. member spoke about Bill C-75 in conjunction with Bill C-71 and the fact that the Liberals are limiting the ability of judges and giving the option of imposing lesser sentences for some of the most egregious crimes in this country. Can the member comment further on how that is going to impact Canadians?

Mr. Kelly McCauley: Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague from Barrie—Innisfil for his hard work on the file. I talked earlier about the failure of the Liberal government to appoint judges. We have had over 200 serious criminal cases across—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Kelly McCauley: I am glad my colleagues across the way find releasing murderers very humorous. We on this side do not think it is a laughing matter.

We have had over 200 serious cases of criminals being released because the Liberals had not appointed judges. On top of this, look at Bill C-75 lowering the penalty for being involved in a gang, lowering the penalty for using date rape drugs. It is a disgrace. The government needs to set its priority at looking after Canadians and not being soft on crime.

Mr. John Brassard: Mr. Speaker, it is a trifecta. I am almost like the hon. member for Winnipeg North.

I want to address an issue that the legislation fails to address and that is the issue of guns and gangs. There have been high-profile incidents. Does the hon. member think this piece of legislation is going to solve those guns and gangs issues that we saw recently in Toronto and in Surrey?

Mr. Kelly McCauley: Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague for his third question and his hard work on the file. He is right in his comments. Nothing in Bill C-71 is going to address the guns and gangs issue.

I am a former gun owner. I had a couple of handguns. I belonged to a gun club in Edmonton. It is very ironic. The name of the gun club was Phoenix. It has, like the Liberal Phoenix fiasco, actually gone under. I spent a lot of time at the Wild West Shooting Centre in West Edmonton Mall. Gun owners are the most conscientious, law-abiding group and again Bill C-71 focuses on those who are following the law and it does nothing against those who are breaking the law.

● (2100)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): Is the House ready for the question?

Some hon. members: Question.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): The question is on Motion No. 1. A vote on this motion also applies to Motions Nos. 2 to 28.

Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

Some hon. members: Yea.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): In my opinion the nays have it.

And five or more members having risen:

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): Pursuant to order made on Tuesday, May 29, 2018, the division stands deferred until Wednesday, June 20, 2018, at the expiry of the time provided for oral questions. The recorded division will also apply to Motions Nos. 2 to 28.

* * *

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister of Small Business and Tourism, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, there have been discussions among the parties and I believe if you seek it you will find unanimous consent for the following motion.

I move:

That notwithstanding any Standing Order or usual practice of the House, following routine proceedings on Wednesday, June 20, 2018:

(a) Bill C-21, An Act to amend the Customs Act, be deemed read a third time and passed on division;

(b) Bill C-62, An Act to amend the Federal Public Sector Labour Relations Act and other Acts, be deemed concurred in at the report stage on division and deemed read a third time and passed on division;

(c) Bill C-64, An Act respecting wrecks, abandoned, dilapidated or hazardous vessels and salvage operations, be deemed read a third time and passed;

(d) Bill C-68, An Act to amend the Fisheries Act and other Acts in consequence, be deemed read a third time and passed on division;

(e) Ways and Means No. 24 be deemed adopted on division, and that the Bill standing on the Order Paper in the name of the Minister of Finance entitled, An Act to implement a multilateral convention to implement tax treaty related measures to prevent base erosion and profit shifting, be deemed read a first time;

(f) the motion respecting Senate Amendments to Bill C-46, An Act to amend the Criminal Code (offences relating to conveyances) and to make consequential amendments to other Acts, standing on the Notice Paper in the name of the Minister of Justice, be deemed adopted on division;

(g) the motion respecting Senate Amendments to Bill C-50, An Act to amend the Canada Elections Act (political financing), standing on the Notice Paper in the name of the Minister of Democratic Institutions, be deemed adopted on division;

(h) the 64th Report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs entitled, Code of Conduct for Members of the House of Commons: Sexual Harassment between Members, presented to the House on Monday June 4, 2018, be concurred in;

(i) the following motion be deemed adopted on division: "That, pursuant to Standing Order 111.1(2) and in accordance with subsection 79.1(1) of the Parliament of Canada Act, R.S.C., 1985, c. P-1, the House approve the appointment of Yves Giroux as Parliamentary Budget Officer for a term of seven years"; and

(j) the House shall stand adjourned until Monday, September 17, 2018, provided that, for the purposes of any Standing Order, it shall be deemed to have been adjourned pursuant to Standing Order 28 and be deemed to have sat on Thursday, June 21 and Friday, June 22, 2018.

Mr. John Brassard: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, I want to make sure what the government House leader said is clear. In paragraph (f), in the part that says "other Acts, standing on the Notice Paper", in fact, I have "Order Paper" on my sheet. I just want to clarify that.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): Members have verified that everything is okay.

Does the hon. minister have the unanimous consent of the House to move the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): The House has heard the terms of the motion. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

(Motion agreed to)

● (2105)

Hon. Bardish Chagger: Mr. Speaker, I am not sure what is going on with the clocks in here, but I think if you ask members, we could agree that the clock reads midnight.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): Is it agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

A motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 38 deemed to have been moved.

[*English*]

EMPLOYMENT

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure for me to have an opportunity tonight to address the attacks on religious liberty and freedom of conscience that we see from the current government. The Liberals have altered the Canada summer jobs program to require that any applicants check a box indicating their agreement with certain propositions. That affirmation is about the private convictions of those groups, not about their activities or their willingness to comply with the law.

Governments always make determinations about what activities they wish to fund, but it is unconscionable in a free society to say that people should be denied the ability to access government services or programs on an equal basis simply because of their private convictions. However, that is the contention of the Liberal government, that faith-based and secular organizations alike should be denied access to public services on the basis of their wish not to positively state their agreement with certain propositions that happen to be important to the government.

This policy responds to no problem or need. It is a mean-spirited attack on the private convictions and liberties of organizations that do excellent work helping the most vulnerable across this country. We are seeing the impact of this policy. Over 1,000 organizations were denied funding this year, with at least one secular not-for-profit organization announcing that it will close its doors as a result of funding lost through this policy.

We are seeing perverse outcomes. We have an organization openly advocating hate against minority groups that did receive the money and organizations that do uncontroversial good work being denied the money. Those who are genuinely hateful apparently do not have a problem lying when they check the box. The only effect of this policy, then, is to screen out the genuinely good and honest who refuse to violate their convictions for 30 pieces of silver.

What is striking to me about this debate, as well, is that we have a government in this country that finds the very idea of conscience to be baffling. The Liberals have said, and the parliamentary secretary, I suspect, will say again in response to my question, something to the effect that faith-based organizations are eligible, and many have received funding, and by the way, there is more money in the program than ever before. The Liberals genuinely do not understand that people of conscience will not check a box that contradicts their convictions, even if they are told that it is meaningless and to check it anyway.

The many Catholic organizations, in particular, that provide help to refugees, prisoners, the sick, the elderly, and children honour St. Thomas More, who preferred execution to signing an attestation that violated his conscience. More's friends tried to persuade him to change his views or cede to compromise, but at least they understood the idea of conscience that informed his actions.

The government, as it is about to reveal in response to this question, has so lost its moral ground that the members cannot conceive of people refusing to sign something they do not agree with to get some money. The Liberals not only lack the constraints of conscience in this case, they fundamentally fail to understand what conscience is. The problem is not one of immorality but of amorality. The idea of firm, unrelenting convictions exceeding self-interest is simply not part of their comprehension.

This has, I believe, wider consequences beyond the particulars of this issue. It is not a surprise to me that the first prime minister in Canadian history to have broken ethics laws while in office is also one who seems so confounded by the notion of conscience.

Whether groups are theoretically eligible, the demand that they sign a form attesting to things they do not believe is an unavoidable impediment to groups that disagree with the particulars of this attestation. Free societies do not demand to know what my private convictions are before I receive public services, and it does not matter how much money is in the program. It matters that the government is hell-bent on discriminating against people of conscience and conviction.

In 2019, we will give Canadians a better option, a party made up of people who disagree with each other on a range of different issues but who fundamentally respect the section 2 guarantees in the Charter of Rights and Freedoms; who respect freedom of conscience; and who believe that great societies are those in which people are free to disagree, to countenance unpopular opinions, and to stand on their convictions.

● (2110)

Mr. Arif Virani (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Heritage (Multiculturalism), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the member for Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan's robust contributions today and indeed on many days in this House.

It is a pleasure to rise to speak about a program, the Canada summer jobs program, that our government has indeed doubled, creating 70,000 paid-work experiences for Canadian youth. The Canada summer jobs program is an integral part of our plan to support Canada's young people so they can get the education and experience they need to get a quality job. It helps young people start off on the right foot toward building their careers, and it helps keep our economy growing and our middle class thriving.

[*Translation*]

The program benefits students and employers alike, and it helps move our economy forward.

[*English*]

Unlike the previous Conservative government, whose policies drove youth unemployment to its highest rates since the nineties, we on this side of the House are investing in young people. Budget 2018 invests an additional $448.5 million over five years to support our youth employment strategy. This funding will help to continue to double the number of job placements funded under the Canada summer jobs program in 2019-20.

On the issue of freedom of conscience and religion raised by my colleague, we have had many robust discussions about this both in this House and outside of this House. Let me be very clear. The changes we have made are not at all, in any way, about excluding faith-based groups. My friend raised the issue of the charter protections. As a constitutional lawyer, I will advise him, but also he will know quite clearly, that subsection 2(a) protects freedom of conscience and religion under the Canadian Constitution put in place by Pierre Trudeau when he was then prime minister of this country.

More importantly, the attestation clause, as has been discussed at length in this chamber, is not about changing doctrine, ideology, or belief with respect to any faith-based group. We recognize the important work that faith-based groups do around this country on a daily basis. We are saying if a Catholic church, a synagogue, a mosque, or a Hindu temple runs a soup kitchen, God bless them for running the soup kitchen. However, if in running that soup kitchen they say that an LGBTQ2+ youth cannot be employed working in that soup kitchen, that is an exclusive policy, and not something that we will fund as a government. That is what the attestation clause is meant to do.

I do not think we see differently on either side of this House. We believe clearly in freedom of conscience on both sides, but we also believe in inclusion on both sides of the House, and "inclusion" means ensuring that people such as an LGBTQ2+ youth have the ability to work in an inclusive environment, including one being run by a faith-based institution.

We are not here to dictate the faith or tenets of various faith groups around this country. As the parliamentary secretary for multiculturalism, who works under the Minister of Canadian Heritage in promoting those very faith-based groups, religious groups, and diverse cultural groups that make up this country, it would be abhorrent for us to even purport to do so.

What we are trying to do is ensure that government funding addresses the needs of Canadians, addresses young people, and gets them employed in jobs that are related to the careers that they are seeking to pursue, but doing so in a manner that protects that fundamental founding document, which is our Charter of Rights and Freedoms, and the rights contained therein. It is a critical facet. Employers continue to understand this. They have applied in record numbers. There are 3,000 first-time funding recipients for this program. That is why we are proud of the implementation of the Canada summer jobs program. We are proud of the fact that we expanded the program and the funding, and that tens of thousands of young people are currently employed.

Mr. Garnett Genuis: Mr. Speaker, with all due respect to my friend across the way, I think the refutation that I am about to give is probably unnecessary since it is obvious from what he said that he does not fundamentally understand the question. He said not to worry because the Liberals are spending more money on the program. It is a program that they have structured in a way that discriminates. He said that faith groups are still eligible. They are only eligible if they check a box that attests to particular propositions that many faith groups and other organizations may either not agree with or simply not see wading into as part of their mandate.

My friend across the way I think clearly misdescribes what this attestation does. The wording of the attestation is clear. In order to get the funding, people have to check a box stating their particular doctrinal agreement with certain particular propositions. It does not speak to the way they will treat people in their interactions with them. Rather, it speaks to their particular—

● (2115)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): The parliamentary secretary.

Mr. Arif Virani: Mr. Speaker, with respect to the comments by my friend opposite, I will reiterate that what we are doing is enhancing the program. We are providing more funding for more jobs right around the country, as compared to the record of the previous government, which drove down youth employment. What I would say to the member opposite is that if the Conservatives are so concerned about jobs for Canadian youth, then why did he and his caucus colleagues vote against the youth employment strategy, student work, integrated learning, and apprenticeship grants in the votes that took place just on Thursday evening of last week?

Again, it would be abhorrent for any government to try to purport to dictate to a religious or a cultural group what they should believe or what tenets or doctrine they should believe in. What we are doing with this program is simply indicating that when they run a program and they are seeking governmental funding to employ students, they must do so in an inclusive manner, such as the example that I gave earlier: when they run a camp or a soup kitchen, God bless them for running it, and running it out of a synagogue, church, temple, or mosque, but when they do so they must make those jobs available for employment to include people like LGBTQ youth.

[*Translation*]

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

Mr. François Choquette (Drummond, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it is always a pleasure to stand in the House to continue debate and to promote official languages across the country.

On March 28, I had the honour of asking the Prime Minister a question after the tabling of the Liberal government's action plan on official languages. From an investment point of view, this action plan does not meet the aspirations of the communities. The FCFA and QCGN had asked for a lot more money. Unfortunately the action plan does not make up, as the Liberals had promised, for the 10-year backlog created by the Conservative government.

However, the government promises more action for francophone immigration outside Quebec and for early childhood, two areas considered essential by our official language minority communities. We still have a long way to go in these areas, however, though they are critical for the survival of our communities. We expect many more initiatives on the part of the government. I would like to know what the government intends to do in these two areas.

I introduced another bill today, one that improves the Official Languages Act. The Liberals voted against Bill C-203 on bilingualism for Supreme Court justices, so I introduced a bill to amend the Official Languages Act. If it is passed, the government will have to commit to appointing bilingual justices to the Supreme Court. That would be a major step forward. Unfortunately, all we have is a policy that is not enshrined in law. That policy has no teeth and can be ignored at will. We need to do something about that fast.

I am vice-chair of the Standing Committee on Official Languages. The committee submitted a unanimous report on community media serving official language minority communities. There again, the committee asked the Liberal government to act quickly.

In the past decade, advertising revenues for media serving OLMC's, official language minority communities, have dropped by 70%. That has made it hard for them to survive. Unfortunately, the Liberal government is investing more and more in Facebook, Google, and other such media, leaving our community media high and dry.

That is why we tabled the report entitled "Media in the Digital Age". This report recommends that the government take funds previously allocated for national media advertising in the current budget and use them to immediately establish a special $2-million emergency fund, which will be disbursed promptly through national advertising contracts to media serving official language minority communities across the country. This is extremely important to community broadcasters that serve official language communities. For the sake of our radio stations and newspapers, it is vital to act now. I hope the government will respond to this request from the committee.

I would like to know what the government plans to do. Will it respond favourably to the very important request contained in this unanimous report?

The Liberals, the Conservatives, and the New Democrats all agree. Will the Liberals agree to award a contract post-haste—

● (2120)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): The hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Heritage.

Mr. Arif Virani (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Heritage (Multiculturalism), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we are very proud of the work we accomplished after consulting Canadians, especially official language minority communities. The result was the new action plan for official languages 2018-23, which meets the needs of our communities. The action plan provides a historic investment of nearly $2.7 billion to strengthen our communities, strengthen access to services, and promote a bilingual Canada.

[*English*]

Leadership, governance, and coordination in the area of official languages are important matters which our government takes very seriously. We have shown a great deal of leadership in the area of official languages since the fall of 2015, and the concrete actions we have taken are a testament to that very commitment.

We have made it a priority to regularly meet with official language stakeholders to listen to their concerns and understand their needs and priorities. This deepened dialogue paved the way to key commitments upon which the action plan for official languages 2018-23 rests: strengthening collaboration with official language stakeholders and communities; extending new funding for official languages to address key challenges and trends, some of which were outlined by the member opposite; favouring evidence-based and grassroots-driven policy decisions; and demonstrating greater transparency and accountability in government funding. These commitments will continue to guide our approach, which fundamentally and above all things is focused on community-driven results.

The Minister of Canadian Heritage will continue to improve the coordination of official languages issues in co-operation with the Privy Council Office, the Treasury Board Secretariat, and the Department of Justice. As well, the Prime Minister has announced that we will be modernizing the Official Languages Act.

[*Translation*]

With regard to governance, the government can count on a high-level committee, the Committee of Assistant Deputy Ministers on Official Languages, currently being co-chaired by representatives from Canadian Heritage, Treasury Board Secretariat, Justice Canada, and the Privy Council Office. This committee helps promote concerted government action on official languages. It opens the way to sharing best practices in a spirit of inter-departmental collaboration.

The committee's mandate was recently broadened to include three priorities, the horizontal federal strategies on official languages, including the action plan, language of work in the federal public service, and managing other issues related to the Official Languages Act.

Mr. François Choquette: Mr. Speaker, unfortunately, my colleague did not answer my question. I wanted to know whether the government was going to release $2 million in emergency funds for media in official language minority communities.

However, he talked about his Prime Minister's desire to amend the Official Languages Act. I hope that they will do that before the end of this 42nd Parliament. They absolutely must address the issue raised by the Fédération des francophones de la Colombie-Britannique regarding part VII of the act, on positive measures. Following the federation's defeat in its case against the Liberal government, the judge said that part VII of the Official Languages Act on positive measures needed to be amended.

Will the government commit to doing that next year and not wait for the next election?

Mr. Arif Virani: Our goal is always to support both official languages across Canada. As for the question raised by the member about the media, I can assure him that we are there for local media, print media, and media that serve francophone communities.

In addition to providing official language minority communities with money in key areas such as community development, culture, immigration, and early childhood, our government is also planning initiatives to further promote both official languages.

[*English*]

Furthermore, we will invest $3 million to enable Statistics Canada to meet the official language data needs of communities and of all orders of government. This intervention will allow for enhanced data-driven decision-making and the improved assessment of the results of our actions.

HEALTH

Mr. Don Davies (Vancouver Kingsway, NDP): Mr. Speaker, In 1999, there was a drug crisis in Portugal. Use of hard drugs was rampant, and approximately 1% of its population reported a drug addiction. Therefore, in 2001, Portugal decided to treat the possession and use of small quantities of drugs as a public health issue, not a criminal one. It decriminalized the use of all drugs, even heroin and cocaine, and unleashed a major public health campaign to tackle addiction. Though possession is still legally prohibited, violations are treated as administrative infractions and removed completely from the criminal realm. That means getting caught using or possessing drugs could result in a small fine or a referral to treatment where appropriate, but not jail time or a criminal record.

The crisis in Portugal soon stabilized, and the ensuing years saw dramatic drops in problematic drug use, infection rates, overdose deaths, and drug-related crime. Portugal's mortality rate from drugs is now four times lower than the European average; the number of teenagers who have experimented with drugs has fallen, and the number of people in treatment has increased. Ninety per cent of public money spent fighting drugs is now channelled toward health care goals. Just 10% is spent on enforcement.

In contrast, in Canada, 70% of funding spent combatting drug use is spent on enforcement. We have the second highest rate of cannabis use among young people in the world, and an opioid overdose crisis that is staggering. Four thousand Canadians lost their lives to overdoses in 2017, up from 3,000 in 2016. We are on track in 2018 to exceed that death toll, with as many as 6,000 Canadians dying from overdoses.

In British Columbia, overdose deaths spiked in March, marking the province's second highest monthly total in history. At the Liberal Party's recent policy convention, delegates voted overwhelmingly to back Jagmeet Singh and the NDP's position on decriminalization and medical regulation as a means of responding to drug overdose deaths. A coalition of 200 family, friends, organizations, policy experts, including former Liberal leader Bob Rae, impacted by the overdose crisis, wrote an open letter urging the Liberals to:

> ...be the progressive government you promised to be, choosing human rights and evidence-based policy over ideological relics.
>
> We need you to listen to our voices as we call for the essential next step: decriminalization. The example of Portugal and other European countries illustrates that this policy works.
>
> We ask you to prevent thousands of more unnecessary deaths by supporting this resolution.

However, both the Liberal Minister of Health and the Prime Minister responded by unequivocally ruling out action.

The Liberal government has also refused to launch an investigation or initiate legal action to recover damages from opioid manufacturers for the tragic consequences and public costs of this crisis. Instead, Liberals have left victims to seek recourse through a private class action lawsuit. This resulted in a proposed settlement of $20 million, with a paltry $2 million allocated to provincial health authorities. Thankfully, the settlement was rejected because no steps were taken to ensure that past and potential future public health care costs were identified. This stands in contrast to aggressive action from U.S. government authorities, which has led to almost $700 million in damages and criminal convictions for improper marketing.

What message does it send when thousands of Canadians die from overdoses and our government fails to seek justice? We owe it to the memory of those lost to this crisis to hold those who profited to account. We need significant federal money for addiction prevention, education, treatment, and harm reduction. We need to stop treating the most vulnerable members of our society like criminals.

Given the severity of the opioid crisis, and that we expect more deaths this year, why will the Liberal government not even consider these evidence-based proposals?

● (2125)

Mrs. Alaina Lockhart (Parliamentary Secretary for Small Business and Tourism, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our government is deeply concerned about the opioid crisis. This is a national public health crisis that is affecting Canadians across regions and from all segments of society.

Our government has taken significant actions to respond to the opioid crisis. These actions complement the Government of Canada's overall approach to drug policy, which is collaborative, compassionate, comprehensive, and evidence-based. Our government has responded through supporting a public health response, enacting new legislation, fast-tracking regulatory action, and significant new investments.

Budget 2018 proposed more than $231 million over five years and $13.5 million per year on an ongoing basis to support new cross-cutting initiatives to address the crisis. This commitment includes one time emergency funding of $150 million for provinces and territories to improve access to treatment services across Canada.

Indeed, we have moved the bar tremendously in the face of the crisis. All the actions that we have taken, including enforcement actions, are to protect and improve the health of Canadians.

For instance, we have taken action by making a greater variety of treatment options available to respond to the opioid crisis and other emergency situations. This includes the implementation of regulations to address urgent public health needs. We have also facilitated access to methadone and medical-grade heroin for the treatment of opioid use disorder.

Our response to the opioid crisis also includes significant actions to reduce harms associated with problematic substance use, for example, by making naloxone available to Canadians without a prescription.

One of the most important ways we can help reverse the trend of increasing opioid-related overdoses and deaths is by informing Canadians about the risks associated with legal and illegal opioids.

The reality is that the impact of this public health crisis has devastated individuals, families, and communities, and continues to affect far too many Canadians. Canadians are demanding that we do more to turn the tide on this crisis and that we do more to hold the pharmaceutical industry accountable for its role in the opioid crisis.

Our government is encouraging all organizations to take action and contribute to the response to the opioid crisis. This includes the pharmaceutical industry. I note with interest that Purdue U.S. has voluntarily decided to not promote prescription opioid products in the United States as its contribution to limiting the potential harms of opioid medications. I would like to see these kinds of actions from Canadian pharmaceutical companies as well.

In the meantime, our government is pursuing strong actions to address industry advertising of prescription opioids to health professionals and organizations. We acknowledge that the pharmaceutical industry's advertising of opioids can provide health professionals with useful information, but it can also create bias and potentially influence prescribing practices. That is why, as part of the comprehensive federal response to the crisis, the Government of Canada is exploring federal options to increase transparency of industry's marketing of opioids. All appropriate options to hold the industry accountable for its continued role in this worsening opioid crisis are being explored.

We are committed to working in co-operation with provinces and territories as well as health practitioners toward greater transparency. Ultimately, together, we will continue to bring forward solutions to save lives and address this national public health crisis.

● (2130)

Mr. Don Davies: Mr. Speaker, the reality is that the Liberal government refuses to declare a public health emergency, and while it is talking the, the death toll goes up.

The arguments for legalization of cannabis are precisely the reasons that underpin decriminalization and regulation of other drugs. It helps with harm reduction. It eliminates the criminal element. It provides safety of product. It protects children and vulnerable Canadians. It unclogs our criminal justice system to deal with real crime. It treats addiction and substance use as a health issue, not a criminal or moral one.

My question to my hon. colleague is this. The arguments for legalizing cannabis are probably not even as compelling as those for other drugs since they are more dangerous. Would she not agree with me that the government should at least look at decriminalizing and regulating all drugs like it has done for cannabis?

Mrs. Alaina Lockhart: Mr. Speaker, our government is committed to addressing this unprecedented health crisis. We will leave no stone unturned in rooting out the causes of the opioid crisis. We are monitoring advertising, assessing evidence, and seeking views on restricting opioid advertising in Canada.

We will continue to work with health professionals, experts on problematic substance use, stakeholders, provinces and territories, municipalities, and other partners to respond to the opioid crisis.

Our government remains committed to reducing harms related to problematic opioid use and addressing the epidemic of opioid-related overdoses in Canada.

[*Translation*]

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): Pursuant to order made Tuesday, May 29, the motion to adjourn the House is now deemed to have been adopted. Accordingly, the House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 2 p.m. pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 9:35 p.m.)

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